

Read **SIR A. CONAN DOYLE'S 'POISON BELT'**

Scoops

STORIES of the **WONDER-WORLD** of **TOMORROW**



2D
EVERY
THURSDAY

**NIGHT EYES
OF THE FLEET**

See Inside

Battles can be Fought in Fog with the Aid of the Night Eyes of the Fleet

The Wonders of Noctovision

SUCH great strides are being made in the science of Noctovision that it will soon be possible for ships to "see" in the darkness and through mist or fog.

With the necessary apparatus, warships could fight sea battles at night or in fog; and smoke screens would become useless before the Night Eyes of the Fleet.

Briefly, Noctovision is television by means of invisible light, or infra-red rays, and has been invented and perfected by Mr. John Eagle Ford.

The principle of Noctovision can be described simply thus:

A line concentrates an image of the scene on to a whirling perforated disc,

behind which is situated a photo-electric cell sensitive to infra-red rays. The light pulses received by the cell are amplified and transmitted over the distance required, where they are converted into visible light rays and focused on to a screen by the method employed in television.

The picture below shows how Noctovision can be used as the Night Eyes of the Fleet.

SCENE SCANNED BY WHIRLING DISC AND PICKED UP BY PHOTO-ELECTRIC CELL SENSITIVE TO INFRA-RED RAYS

VARIATIONS OF CURRENT AMPLIFIED AND TRANSMITTED BY WIRE OR WIRELESS.



COMMANDER USES SQUARED SCREEN FOR SIGHT FINDING BY USUAL METHOD.

AUDIO SIGNALS CONVERTED TO VISUAL LIGHT IMPULSES AND RECEIVED ON SCREEN

BACK OPERATOR SENDS COMMANDS, INSTRUCTIONS TO GUNNERS AND TO ALL PARTS OF THE SHIP.

The POISON Belt

★ SUBMERGED

THE chamber, which was destined to be the scene of our unforgettable experience was a charmingly feminine sitting room, some fourteen or sixteen feet square.

At the end of it, divided by a curtain of red velvet, was a small apartment which formed the Professor's dressing room. This is how opened into a large bedroom. The entrance was still hanging, but the bedroom and dressing room were practically one chamber for the purposes of our experiment. The door and the window frame had been plastered round with varnished paper, so as to be practically sealed. Above the other door, which opened on to the landing, there hung a fanlight which could be taken by a cord when some ventilation became absolutely necessary. A large shawl in a tub stood in each corner.

"How to get rid of our excessive outburst, devoid without unduly wasting our oxygen is a delicate and vital question," said Challenger, looking round him after the five men, who had been told not to sit against the wall. "This larger case in preparation I could have brought the whole concentrated force of my intelligence to bear upon fully upon the problem, but as it is we must do what we can. The shawl will be of some small service. Two of the oxygen tubes are ready to be turned on at an instant's notice, so that we cannot be taken unawares. At the same time, it would be well not to go far from the room, as the noise may be a serious and urgent one."

There was a broad, low window opening out upon a balcony. The view beyond was the most at that which we had already obtained from the study. Looking out, I could see an signs of disaster anywhere. There was a road cutting down the side of the hill under my very eyes. A car from the station, one of those prehistoric survivors which are only to be found in our country villages, was rolling slowly up the hill. Lower down was a carter, wheeling a perambulator and leading a second child by the hand. The low creak of wheels from the cottage gave the whole undisturbed landscape an air of settled

order and homely comfort. Nowhere in the blue heaven or on the earth south was there any foreshadowing of a catastrophe. The barometer rose back to the fields once more and the pillars, in pairs and fairs, were still dominating round the lake. There was no change a moment within our own land and such a feeling of our surrounding forces that the indifference of these people was amazing.

FOR NEW READERS

In a letter to the *Press*, Professor Challenger announces that it is his opinion that the mysterious lowering of Mount Vesuvius's Sea at the apartment point is a widespread volcanic change, and that the world is undergoing not a poison belt of other. He attributes the sudden change of the nature of the island of Samatra to the effects of the poison.

At the same time, the Professor has invited to his home the little group of the "Le" World—Professor Sumner, Lord John Rector, and Mr. Malone, the newspaper reporter.

He asks them all to bring a cylinder of oxygen, and when they arrive at his house he announces that, in his opinion, they are about to witness the end of the world.

Reports that come as from all parts of the world here on his view, and the little party makes preparations for the end.

"These fellows don't seem to feel any of about," I, pointing down at the lake.

"Have you played golf?" asked Lord John.

"No, I have not."

"Well, young fellow, when was the last time you had a golf?" asked Lord John.

"I would take the creek of down to step a true golf."

"There's that telephone bell again."

From time to time during and after lunch the high, nervous ring had announced the

Professor. He gave us the news as it came through to him in a few short sentences. Such terrible news had never been registered in the world's history before. The great shadow was creeping up from the South like a winged tide of death. Egypt had gone through its delirium and was now a wasteland. Spain and Portugal after a wild fancy in which the Catholics and the Anarchists had fought most desperately, were now a vast wasteland.

No cable messages were received any longer from South America. In North America the Southern States, after some terrible period of anarchy, had succumbed to the poison. North of Maryland the effect was not yet marked, and in Canada it was still perceptible. Belgium, Holland, and Denmark had each in turn been affected.

Disappearing messages were flashing from every quarter in the good countries of Europe, to the deserts and the doctors of world-wide reports, imploring their advice. The astronomers, too, were deluged with messages. Nothing could be done. The thing was too serious and beyond our human knowledge or control. It was death—quietly but inevitably—death for young and old, for weak and strong, for rich and poor, without hope or possibility of escape.

Such was the news which, in scattered, distant messages, the telephones had brought us. The great cities already knew their fate, and so far as we could gather were preparing to meet it with dignity and resignation.

Yet here were our golfers and laborers like the birds who gathered under the shadow of the bridge. It seemed amazing. And yet how could they know? It had all come upon us in one quiet stroke. What was there in the missing paper to alarm them? And now it was too late; they were in the atmosphere. Even as we looked some rumors seemed to have spread, for we saw the ropes hanging from the fields. Some of the golfers were returning to the club-house. They were waving as if taking refuge from a shower. Then the hills behind them behind them. Others were continuing their game.

The organ had started and was playing her grandiose hymn to the bell again. I noticed that she had her hand to her face. The cab had stopped and the tired horse,

By Sir Arthur CONAN DOYLE

with his head sunk to his knees, was resting above them was a sweet smile—now large wreath of children like, now for a few fancy white clouds over the distant down. If the human race must die to-day, it was at least upon a glorious death-bed. And yet all that gentle loneliness of Nature made this terrible and wholesale destruction the more possible and awful. Surely it was too goodly a wilderness that we should be so selfish, as they, created from it.

But I have said that the telephone-bell had rung once more. Suddenly I heard Challenger's tremendous voice from the hall.

"Mabel!" he cried. "You are wanted." I rushed down to the instrument. It was McArthur speaking from London.

"Thank you, Mr. McKee!" cried his faithful voice. "Mr. McKee, for God's sake, see if Professor Challenger can suggest anything that can be done."

"He can suggest nothing, sir," I answered. "He regards the crisis as universal and inevitable. We have some oxygen here, but it can only delay our fate for a few hours."

"Oxygen!" cried the voice. "There is no time to get any. The office has been a perfect pandemonium all morning. New hall on the staff are impossible. I am weighed down with business myself. From my window I can see the people lying thick in Fleet Street. Judging by the last telegram, the whole world—"

His voice had been sinking and suddenly stopped. An instant later I heard through the telephone a stifled shriek, as if his head had fallen forward on the desk.

"Mr. McKee!" I cried. "Mr. McKee!"

There was no answer. I knew as I replaced the receiver that his voice had been stifled for ever.

At that instant, just as I took a step back towards the telephone, the thing was on me. It was as if I were bathed, up to my shoulders in water, with suddenly an unexpected by a rolling wave. As terrible hands seemed to have quickly closed round my throat and to be gently pressing the life from me. I was conscious of agonizing oppression upon my chest, great tightness within my head, a lead dragging in my ears, and bright light before my eyes. I staggered to the balcony of the street.

At the same moment, resting and smiling like a wounded butterfly, Challenger dashed past me, a terrible vision, with red-purple hair, engorged eyes, and bristling hair. His little wife, insensible to all appearance, was slung over his great shoulder, and he thundered and thundered on the stair, something and tripping, but crying himself and her through about will dance through that terrible atmosphere in the form of temporary safety.

At the night of his effort, I, too, reeled up the steps, clambering, falling, clashing at the wall, and I flung half minutes upon my face on the upper landing. Lord John's fingers of steel were in the collar of my coat, and a moment later I was stretched upon my back, unable to speak or move, as the beautiful corpse. The wound lay beside it, and darkness was hatched as a shroud by the window, his head nearly touching his knees.

As a house I saw Challenger, like a monstrous beetle, crawling slowly across the floor, and a moment later I heard the gentle humming of the escaping oxygen. Challenger bearded two or three times with enormous gills, his lungs roaring as he drew in the vile gas.

"It is mortal!" he cried, exultantly. "My poisoning has been justified!" He was up on his feet again, alert and strong. With a look in his head he looked over to his wife and held it to her face. In a few seconds she roused, stirred, and sat up.

He turned to me, and I felt the tide of his steady winding through my arteries. My mouth told me then it was but a little respite, and yet, curiously as we talk of its value, every hour of existence now seemed an unreasonable thing.

Never have I known such a thrill of sensation as you came with that feeling of his. The weight fell away from my lungs, the head leaped from my brow, a sweet feeling of peace and gentle, largest comfort stole over me. I lay watching Summerlike hours under the same canopy, and finally Lord John took his turn. His spring to his feet and gave me a hand to rise, while Challenger picked up his wife and laid her on the sofa.

"Oh, George, I am so sorry you brought me back," she said, holding her by the hand. "The door of death is indeed, as you said, hung with beautiful, shimmering curtains. For, once the shocking feeling had passed, it was all unacceptably soothing and beautiful. Why have you dragged me back!"

"Because I wish that we make the passage together. We have been together so many years. It would be sad to fall apart at the supreme moment."

For a moment as his teacher voice I caught a glimpse of a new Challenger, something very far from the bullying, snoring, arrogant man who had alternately amazed and offended his generation. Here in the shadow of death

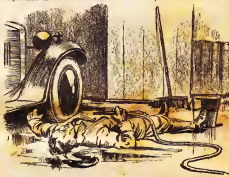
sofa that he was relating. His husband turned an uneasy gas.

"In prehistoric days," said he, "they used to keep a white mouse in every nation, as its definite organization gave signs of a volcanic atmosphere before it was perceived by the volcano. Yes, my dear, will be our white mouse. I have no more to say, and you are better."

"Yes, I am better." "Possibly we have hit upon the correct mixture. When we have ascertained exactly how little will serve, we shall be able to compute how long we shall be able to exist. Unfortunately, in consulting ourselves we have already consumed a considerable proportion of this first tube."

"Does it matter?" asked Lord John, who was standing with his hands in his pockets close to the window. "If we have to go, what is the use of biding?" "You don't suppose there's any chance for us?" Challenger snarled and shook his head.

"Well, then, don't you think there is more dignity in taking the jump and not waiting to be pushed up? If it must be so



was the innermost Challenger, the man who had won and held a woman's love.

Suddenly his mood changed, and he was one strong certain man again.

"Alone of all mankind I was and freed this catastrophe," said he, with a ring of conviction and scientific triumph in his voice. "As to you, my good Summerlike, I trust your last doubts have been resolved as to the meaning of the burning of the brain is the question, and that you will no longer contend that my letter in the *Times* was based upon a defense."

For once our pragmatic criticism was dead to a challenge. He could but sit gazing and stretching his long, thin limbs, as if to secure himself that he was still really upon the planet. Challenger walked across to the oxygen tube, and the sound of the loud hissing fell away till it was the faint gentle vibration.

"We must husband our supply of the gas," he said. "The atmosphere of the moon is now strongly hyper-oxygenated, and I take it that some of us feel any distressing symptoms. We can only determine by actual experiments what amount added to the air will serve to neutralize the poison. Let us see how that will do."

We sat in silent, nervous tension for five minutes or more, observing our own sensations. I had just begun to fancy that I felt the constriction round my temples again when Mrs. Challenger called out from the

"I'm for oxygen! my proper, damper off the gas, and open the window."

"Why not?" said the lady, heavily.

"Surely, George, Lord John is right, and it is better so."

"I must strongly object," cried Challenger, in a querulous voice. "When we must do it by all means do, but to deliberately anticipate death seems to me to be a foolish and unpardonable action."

"What does our young friend say to it?" asked Challenger.

"I think we should see it to the end," said I.

"And I am strongly of the same opinion," said he.

"Then, George, if you say so, I think as too," said the lady.

"Well, well, I'm only putting it as an 'argument,' and Lord John. If you all wish to see it through I am with you. It's bound to come, and no amount of shoving my life, and as many deaths as need fall, but I'm with you on my top note."

"Granting the continuity of life," said Challenger, in his most dialectic manner, "most of us can produce what opportunities of observation may have been from what we may call the spirit plane to the plane of matter. It rarely must be evident to the most obtuse person that it is while we are ourselves material that we are most fitted to watch and form a judgment upon material phenomena. Therefore it is only by keeping

The Silence of Universal Death

alive. For these few extra hours that we can hope to carry on in to some future world, even a clear conception of the most stupendous event that the world, or the universe so far as we know it, has ever associated to me it would seem a dependable thing that we should be very well carried by so much as a minute so wonderful an experience."

"I am strongly of the same opinion," cried Summerville.

"Carried without a division," said Lord John. "By George, that poor devil of a chauffeur of yours down in the yard there has made his last journey. No one makes a jolly and breezy trip in."

"It would be absolute madness," cried Summerville.

"Well, I suppose it would," said Lord John. "It couldn't help him, and would rather set gas all over the house, even if we ever got back alive. My word, look at the little birds under the trees!"

We drew our chairs up to the long, low window, the lady still resting with closed eyes upon the window. I remember that the sunbeams and grotesque ideas crossed my mind—the flowers may have been heightened by the heavy stiffness of the air which we were breathing—that we were in the front seats of the vehicle at the last of the drama of the world.

In the immediate foreground, beneath our very eyes, was the small yard with the half-cleaned motor-car standing in it. Austin, the chauffeur, had recovered his final notion at last, for he was kneeling on his back beside the wheel, with a great black bronze upon his forehead where it had struck the step or scapular in falling. He still held in his hand the handle of the lever with which he had been working down his machine.

A couple of small plums from down in the corner of the yard, and underneath them lay several pathetic little birds of fatty brethren with tiny feet upturned. The sweep of Death's wings had included everything great and small within its embrace.

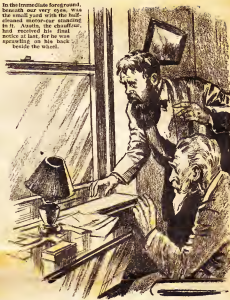
Over the wall of the yard we looked down upon the winding road which led to the station. A group of the roopers whom we had seen running from the fields were lying all pell-mell, their bodies crumpled each other, at the bottom of it. Further up the road, just by, with her head and shoulders propped against the slope of the grassy bank, lay the lady, the lady from the parish-hall, and it was a monstrous bundle of wraps in her arms. Close behind her a baby (just upon the outside showed where the little feet were stretched. Still nearer to us was the dead—old horse kneeling between the wheels. The old driver was hanging over the splash board like some grotesque scorpion, his arms drooping absurdly in front of him.

Through the window we could dimly discern that a young man, was seated inside. The door was swinging open, and his head was groping the handle, as if he had attempted to beg forth at the last instant.

In the middle distance by the golf links, dotted as they had been in the morning with the dark figures of the golfers, lying motionless upon the green of the course, at among the bushes which skirted it. On one particular green there were several bodies stretched where a footman, with its sudden, held to their game to the last.

No bird flew in the blue vault of heaven, no man or beast moved upon the vast grassy-side which lay before us. The evening sun shone its powerful radiance across it, but three brooded over it all the stillness and the silence of universal death—death in which we went to meet our fate. At the present instant that one final flash of light, by holding us the eye, shut us off from the fate of all our kind. For a few short hours the knowledge and foreboding of our fate could preserve our little calm of life at the vast desert of death, and save us from participation in the common catastrophe. Then the gas would run hot, we, too, should be gazing upon that cherry-colored landscape

In the immediate foreground, beneath our very eyes, was the small yard with the half-cleaned motor-car standing in it. Austin, the chauffeur, had recovered his final notion at last, for he was kneeling on his back beside the wheel.



carpet, and the fate of the human race and of all earthly life would be complete. For a long time, in a mood which was too solemn for speech, we looked out at the tragic world.

"There is a house on fire," said Challenger at last, pointing to a column of smoke which rose above the trees. "There will, I expect, be many such—possibly whole cities as flames—when we consider how many folk may have dropped with lights in their hands. Ah, there you see another on the top of Cumborough Hill. It is the golf clubhouse, so I can mistake. There is the church clock striking the hour. It would indicate our philosophers to know that man-made mechanism has survived the race who made it."

"By George," cried Lord John, shagging rapidly from his chair. "What's that puff of smoke? It's a train."

We heard the roar of it, and presently it came flying into sight, going at what seemed to us to be a prodigious speed. Whereas it had come, at last, for we had no means of knowing. Only by some miracle of luck could it have gone any distance. But now we were to see the terrible end of its career. A train of one broken steel monster upon the iron. We held our breath as the express passed along the main track.

The crash was horrible. Engines and carriages piled themselves into a hill of splintered wood and twisted iron. Red sparks of fire flew up from the wreckage and it was all silence. For half an hour we sat

with hardly a word, stunned by the stupendous sight.

"Poor, poor people!" cried Mrs. Chellinger at last, clapping with a shudder to her husband's arm.

"My dear, they were no more innocent than the cattle into which they crashed, or the carmen which they have now become," said Challenger, shaking her hand scornfully. "It was a train at the bridge when it left Victoria, but it was driven and inspired by the dead long before it reached its fate."

"All over the world the same thing must be going on," said I, as a vision of strange happenings rose before me. "Think of the ships at sea—how they will steam on and on, and the hurricanes die down, or until they see their fill upon some beach. The sailing ships, too—how they will bark and fill with their cargoes of dead sailors, while their captains, not and their ports lock, will go by one side, sink below the surface. Perhaps a century hence the Atlantic may still be dotted with the old drifting derelicts."

"And the folk in the red rooms," said Summerville, with a dismal shudder. "If ever prodigents should by any chance live upon Earth again, they will have some strange theories of the endurance of man in carelessness states."

"I don't profess to know about such things," murmured Lord John, "but it seems to me the Earth will be 'Ye les, empty, after this. When once our human crowd is wiped off, how will it ever get on again?"

"The world was empty before," Challenger answered, gravely. "Under laws

The World's Last Hours

which in their inception are beyond and above us, is better accepted. Why may this same process not happen again?"

"My dear Challenger, you can't mean that?"

"I am not in the habit, Professor Sumner, of saying things which I do not mean. The observation is foolish." Out went the hand and down came the eyelids.

Well, you find an absolute degeneration, and mean to die now," said Sumner, slowly.

"And you, sir, have lived an extraordinary existence, and never can hope now to emerge from it."

Your worst critics will never accuse you of lacking imagination," Sumner retorted.

"Upon my word!" said Lord John. "It would be like you if you used up our last drop of oxygen in showing such other. What can it matter whether I die, were I back or not? I surely need to be in our time."

"Is that scientific, sir, to let my own very pronounced limitations?" said Challenger, severely. "The true scientific mind is not to be laid down by its own conditions of time and space. It builds itself an observatory erected upon the border line of present, which separates the infinite past from the infinite future. From this vantage point it takes its sallies even to the beginning and to the end of all things. As for me, the scientific mind does at its post working in earnest and methodic fashion to the end. It disregards to getty a thing as its own physical limitations as completely as it does all other limitations upon the plane of matter. Am I right, Professor Sumner?"

Sumner grinned an ingenuous smile. "With certain reservations, I agree, my lord."

"The ideal scientific mind," continued Challenger—"I put it in the third person rather than appear to be too self-complacent—the ideal scientific mind should be capable of thinking out a point of abstract knowledge in the interval between its own falling from a balloon and reaching the Earth. Men of this stamp there are needed to form the continuance of Nature and the background of truth."

"It strikes me Nature's on top this time," said Lord John looking out of the window. "I've read some leading articles about you gentlemen controlling her, but she's getting a bit of her own back."

"It is not a temporary setback," said Challenger, with conviction. "The vegetable world has, as you can see, survived Lord's the hands of that plane time. The birds are dead, but the plant flourish. From that vegetable life is passed and to march will come in time, the tiny crawling microscope shows which are the pioneers of that great army of life in which for the instant we live have the extraordinary duty of serving as rearguard. Once the lowest form of life has established itself, the last advent of Man is as certain as the growth of the oak from the acorn. The old world will swing round once more."

"But the poison?" I asked. "Will that not up it in the end?"

"It may be a acute stroke or byer in the other—a lightning bolt. Strain across that empire comes in which we float. In tolerances may be established, and life accommodate itself to a new condition. The mere fact that with a comparatively small hyper-organization of our blood we can hold our against it is surely a proof in itself that as very great change would be needed to enable animal life to emerge."

The smoking house beyond the trees had burst into flames. We could see the high turrets of fire shooting up into the air.

"It's pretty awful," murmured Lord John, more impressed than I had ever seen him.

"Well, after all, what does it matter?" I remarked. "The world is dead. Creation is surely the best burial."

"It would shatter as up if this house went ablaze."

"I foresee the danger," said Challenger, "and asked my wife to guard against it."

"Everything is quite safe, dear. But my head begins to throb again. What a dreadful atmosphere!"

"We must change it," said Challenger. He bent over his cylinder of oxygen.

"Is nearly empty," said he. "It has lasted us some three and a half hours. It is now close on eight o'clock. We shall get through the night easily. I should expect the end about nine o'clock tomorrow morning. We shall see our course, which shall be all our own."

He turned on his second tank and opened for half a minute the bright light over the door. Then he sat on because perceptibly better, but our own symptoms more acute, he closed it once again.

"By the way," said he, "I am now on five open oxygen alone. It doesn't matter and over. I assure you, gentlemen, that when I invited you to my house and to what I had hoped would be an interesting reunion, I had intended that my kitchen should purely itself. However, we must do what we can. I am sure that you will agree with me that it would be folly to continue on air too rapidly by lighting an oil lamp. I have some small portions of cold venison, lamb, and poultry, which, with a couple of bottles of claret, may serve our turn. Thank you, my dear—see as ever you are the queen of managers."

It was indeed wonderful how, with the self-respect and sense of propriety of the British housekeeper, the lady had within a few minutes adorned the circular table with a more varied cloth, laid the napkins upon it, and set forth the simple meal with all the elegance of chivalry, including an electric torch hung in the center. Wonderful also, was it to find that our appetites were renewed.

The World Clears THE POISON BELT

With the last of their oxygen and gas, Professor Challenger's company open a window to gaze the end. But the world has cleared the Poison Belt: They know of all mankind are saved. Read next week a brilliant illustration of this amazing story.

"It is the measure of our emotion," said Challenger, with that air of modesty with which he brought his scientific mind to the explanation of humble facts. "We have gone through a great crisis. That means molecular disturbance. That in turn means the need for repair. Great sorrow or great joy should bring intense hunger—not abstinence from food, as our ascetics will have it."

"That's why the country folk have great feasts of food," I remarked.

"Exactly. Our young friend has hit upon an excellent illustration. Let me give you another slice of tongue."

"The same with oranges," said Lord John, cutting away at the bowl. "I've seen those boys—a chief up the Amazon River, and they ate a grape that must have weighed as much as the tribe. There are some of these down New Guinea who eat the little black-headed himself, you by way of a last tiny bit. Well, of all the funeral feasts on this earth, I suppose the one we are taking is the queerest."

"The strange thing is," said Mrs. Challenger, "that I find it impossible to feel grief for those who are gone. There are my father and mother at Bedford. I know that they are dead, and yet in this tremendous moment I hardly can find my sharp sorrow for my immediate, even for them."

"And my old mother in her cottage in Ireland," said I. "I can see her in my mind's eye, with her shawl and her lace cap,

lying back with closed eyes in the old, high-backed chair, with the shawl over her shoulders and her book beside her. Why should I weep for her? She has passed and I am gone, and all I may be aware her in some other life than England is to Ireland. Yet I grieve to think that that dear body is no more."

"As to the lady," remarked Challenger, "we do not mourn over the passing of our mother and the old body of our best, though they were once part of ourselves. Neither does a one-legged man grieve unreasonably over his missing member. The physical body has rather been a source of pain and fatigue to us. It is our constant reminder of our limitations. Why, then, should we weep about its detachment from our perished self?"

"If they can indeed be detached, Sumner has guessed. But, anyhow, universal death is dreadful!"

"As I have already explained, said Challenger, "a universal death must be as nature to far less probable than an isolated one."

"Same in a bottle," remarked Lord John. "If you saw a single man lying on that floor with his chest knocked in and a hole in his head it would turn you sick. But I've seen ten thousand on their backs in the trenches, and those were part of ourselves. For when you see nature's history the life of any man is too small a thing to worry over. When a thousand men put together, such as happened to-day, you can't pick your own parts far out of the crowd."

"I wish it were well over with us," said the lady, weakly. "Oh, George, I am so frightened!"

"You'll be the bravest of us all, little lady, when the time comes. I've been a blunderer all my life, but you, dear, as you'll find just is what that G. E. is, as he was made and couldn't help himself. After all, you wouldn't have had anyone else?"

"No one in the whole wide world, dear," said she, and put her arms round her husband. "We three waited for the world and stood amazed at the sight which met our eyes."

Darkness had fallen and the dead world was shrouded in gloom. That night across the western horizon was one long, vivid scarlet streak, waving and coming in third pulses of life, leaping suddenly to a crimson flash and then dying down to a glowing line of fire.

"Lovers in danger," I cried. "No, it is Brighton which is burning," said Challenger, stepping across to join us. "You can see the curved back of the dome against the glow. That fire is mine on the farther side of it. The whole town must be ablaze."

The stars were around and glared at different points, and the debris upon the railway line was still smoldering dimly, but they all seemed mere pin-points of light compared to that monstrous conflagration throbbing beyond the belt. What copy it would all have made for the Gazette! Had even a journalist such as opening and so little chance of doing it—the snap of a scope, and no one to appreciate it.

And then, suddenly, the old instant of recording came out and. If these pins of silence could be as true to their life's work to the very end, why should not I, as my humble way, be so constant? No human eye might ever rest upon what I had done. But the lung might had to be posted somehow, and for us, at least, sleep seemed to be out of the question. My notes would help to pass the weary hours and to occupy my thoughts. This it is that I have before me the notebook with its scribbled pages, written coarsely upon my knee in the dim, waning light of our one electric torch. Had I the literary touch they might have been worthy of the occasion. As it is, they may still serve to bring to other minds the long, dreamy emotion and images of that awful night.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



The Earthmen marched forward as the wall of flaming oil sprang up behind them.

One of the last strongholds of Nature on Earth is the mighty Depths of the Sea. Man has descended but 2,100 feet into the 7 miles Depth of the Atlantic. In this highly imaginative story our author explores the unknown immensity of the ocean.

It was among the friendliness of Sea Flight, the Prince of the taller fish men, that Blanneman and Kells had obtained the direction of this way to escape to the upper world.

But what had happened to Alot Cornwall, their companion? He had been left behind when the earth dropped on them; but Sea Flight had promised to provide the means of ascent for Cornwall from the bed of the sea. So far as Cornwall was concerned, the only possibility of finding whether he had been successful was to push forward towards the rendezvous that had been arranged—the British Consul's headquarters at Montevideo. And now Blanneman and Kells were on their way to South America. But it promised to be a long job, swimming along in darkness, laden with provisions and diving suits.

The dust settled as they advanced and the curious fact that their eyes, since they had entered these regions, had become callous, became more pronounced. To three, two during warlike adventures, this was an expedient without remark; they knew that the human eye has this peculiarity: that it can to a large degree shut itself to its surroundings, just as a prisoner through long confinement in a dark dungeon cannot bear the light when he is released.

The clearing of the dust made the passage possible, dimly in darkness, and when they had walked for some time Blanneman perceived Kells's head quiver and peered. Down the wall of the tunnel he had observed a thin stream of water flowing in a ditch. It dropped as if from a drain above, fell close and gleaming in the ground and disappeared in a crack that ran jagged across the floor.

For a moment the two stood looking at this tiny waterfall. They observed—and observed for some time—that the layer in which they stood was of strange classification. And now Blanneman noted the glow of life below. Kells followed his example. They found there was hot, but not oppressive and they breathed more freely than they had done when their helmets were closed.

Blanneman noted his heavy, lead-weighted

DEVILMAN of the DEEP

★EARTHMEN LEAVE FOR HOME

Blanneman and Kells closed the face-plates of their diving helmets and soon in their feet to survey their surroundings.

No sound came to them from the outer world, but the dust floated before them in this waste, strangely illumined by the electric torch which Blanneman flashed about. Except for the glow of that ray they were in utter darkness, and once having ascertained that they could move forward, saw the passage that ran just high enough for them to walk upright, the flash lamp was extinguished. The battery had to be exchanged for future adventures.

They were the first human beings who had ever stood on near the earth's core, and never since they had descended from the outer surface was there more need for caution than now. Blind in hand they stepped along the floor of the passage, standing in the darkness now and then, feeling their way by placing their free hands against the rugged walls.

Nevertheless though they were, the need for self preservation was apparent in their words; and while they could not talk because their helmets were closed the same thoughts passed through both their brains.

Behind the man of fallen earth that had almost smothered them, and which they had left behind some hours before, the second fishman were fighting their battle for the possession of the subterranean world.

Devilmen, that manner whose mortality was half shark and half human, had been faced by Sea Flight, whose intelligence and leadership were of a higher order, in retreat to the ocean surrounding the water. The law of life which governed the serenity of waters above in the jungles of the world had been demonstrated at similar, in that aspect at least, in these underground regions. The first only could survive.

diving boots and kicked at the ground, then broke off a piece of worn rock from the wall, holding it close to his face.

"Fumes there?" he remarked to Kells. "It must be somewhere there for it to keep the heat of the volcano from us. We can not bear the burning of the Jutlandian except faintly."

Yet, in the silence they could hear a strange noise, no nearer from below, that rose at times to the muffled explosion of an volcano, then died down to a hardly audible whisper. They stood listening for some time to this agony of the world in the thence of fascination.

But now another sound attracted their attention. It came from behind, and made them both reach for their revolvers. It was the sound of the voice of Devilman!

What he said they could not tell, but it was unmistakable, that voice, that transporting entrance that might have been a telephone's notes. It rose and fell, growling and sighing, thrumming like the rumble of a cogged iron's gears, then reached a height that seemed to denote a challenge, and died down abruptly.

Dumb Horrors of the Undersea World

Stammer sighed once more.

"Devilman!" whispered Stammer. "He must have ended his flight, and here we sit in pursuit of us. We—"

He snapped out the light suddenly, and his form stiffened. Kells felt the very sensation of danger like companionary companions. They stood still, eyes staring ahead.

"I saw something!" whispered Stammer. "I felt on the edge of the light!"

His eyes shook as he spoke, his revolver was raised ready to fire. But nothing could be seen, not a sign of life was there in the tunnel.

They remained on the alert for some time, until they began to think that Stammer had been mistaken, that his eyes had played him false.

"We cannot remain here," said Stammer at last. "We must go on. Maybe I was wrong, Kells."

Continuously they advanced. That journey to South America had to be completed as quickly as possible if they were to see the light of day again.

They met no resistance and gradually their fear of the unknown left them. They trod on with increasing vigor and energy. Perhaps Devilman had abandoned the chase.

The path became easier, the ground smoother, and the roof rose higher. Now and then they entered irregularly shaped chambers that stretched again towards the opposite side, and then the passage continued at below.

They noticed that these chambers became more numerous as they advanced, and they were a regular series, connected by tunnels. They thought they heard the wush of unseen currents, the rushing of underground rivers. Once there crossed a track that rose to their knees.

It flared dark and sudden from left to right, and Kells dipped his head to it and turned it. It was soft. This must be a tunnel of the same nature, then, that had forced its way down through the rock.

"Let's have some food here," advised Stammer, for they were both weary with the tramp. "We've been searching steadily for hours and we'll need to conserve our strength."

They sat down and opened their packs and ate heartily. Among their provisions Stammer had placed some of the wonderful strengthening concoctions that they had eaten several times before. When it was they did not know, but it had the effect of putting great energy into their frames.

Stammer, after they had satisfied their hunger, took out the small pocket compass he carried and watched the needle, then made some calculations.

"We are walking due west," he announced, "and that is just as we ought to go."

He bang the beam of his torch to a wide circle. Not a sign of life, nothing moving, but the torch's ray revealed a thousand answering flashes from the ground.

Kells stopped and gazed up one of the small cracks that had glared suddenly. He held it under the torch, then both eyes were set in wild astonishment. What Kells held was a giant scorpion.

They were in a state of dizziness and not only dizziness, but nausea, stupor and vertigo. Having observed the torch light touched them.

Upward Stammer threw the beam of the torch, and now they both cried out in wonder.

From the roof, from every corner of it, there came flashes of every colored perfume stone, known, red, blue, green, white, yellow, purple. And yet small eyes from small cracks, but flashes as from mirrors!

"Are we being led, or are these things really what they seem?" cried Kells.

He drew a white stone slowly across the edge of his face, gazed carefully, greatly, without pause. The stone cut the glare without effort, leaving a clear void that

proved its nature beyond a shadow of doubt.

"We'll have some of these," he said, and gathered a few which he stored in his pocket.

Stammer did the same, taking not diamonds, but other stones, and as they were thus engaged Kells, raising his eyes from the ground, noticed a cry that rang through the darkness of the chamber.

* AMBUSH IN THE CAVE

STAMMER sprang to his feet. But the service of what they saw from them to the spot.

Out of the gloom there had advanced upon them shapes that loomed so long, loomed towards them from the passage ahead.

Great, gray shapes they were, more like kangaroos than anything else. Six of them stood in a row ten feet high, balancing themselves on their hind legs, of legs they were, and looking on their chests with their dejected figures that were poor to wit.

And then there came the breeze, blowing more strongly now, and on the breeze the trumpet of a voice that could not be mistaken.

It was Devilman, but he remained unseen, and there was no telling from the silence where he was hidden. But at the sound of that yell the six beasts leaped. There was an flash for the two men to see them rearing before they could fire the great shapes were upon them in a confused whirl of arms and legs.

Stammer and Kells were lifted from their feet and held in the embrace of two monsters, pressed tightly against breasts that were soft and supple, and the beasts began a series of leaping movements into the tunnel from which they had emerged.

At first there was not a chance for Stammer and Kells to defend themselves. The attack was so swift, the leaps had been so quick and unexpected. But as Stammer lifted himself in danger of slipping from the figures on the creature that carried him, he found that his right hand was no longer crushed into the side of the beast.

Quickly he edged his hand down to and pressed his revolver against the side of the creature as it landed on the ground and prepared to spring again. But the revolver was a useless thing, though its body was useful. The small of Stammer's back struck Stammer's monster as he leaped, the kangaroo-like creature falling beside him.

He saw a figure scurried out to grasp him, and he fired again as he lay, straight at the small head and the single eye that was in the centre of its forehead.

The eye disappeared suddenly, and from the sound there came the dark flash that the behemoth called blood. The beast shivered and lay still.

Stammer was on his knees in a moment, his back cracking the ground for Kells. He saw ahead his companion's legs stretch out from the side of the beast that carried him. Taking steady aim, Stammer fired, the beast dropped to its belly, and Kells was not awaiting further help.

"Here, Kells!" roared Stammer, seeing that Kells was bewildered by the fall.

The Kells could not join his companion just then. Two of the monsters had been slain, but two more leaped at Kells as he lay. They flapped more upon him when his gun pointed its message and a third went down. But he was picked up by the companion, and his revolver rattled to the ground.

He struggled fiercely against that embrace, kicking and punching, and Stammer moved to his knees, the last leg of the creature drawn back for a smother blow. It all occurred in a split-second. Kells' line the left of the leg of a kangaroo that had been poised, and it it landed on Kells he would be disemboweled in that upper downward stroke.

But Stammer's revolver drew a bead on

the hump of the beast, and its bullet smashed the muscle that moved the leg. There went the monster, staggering backward on one foot until it fell, and again Kells was thrown free.

That time he drew his knife, and as the figures were thrown out to catch him again, he rolled away behind their necks after cutting one of the figures completely off at a slashing stroke.

That was the last that Stammer was able to see of Kells' struggle. For the remaining moments turned their attention on him. They had been intent on the battle for possession of Kells, but the revolver shot from them drew away their eyes and their heads rose from the ground as once he lay leaped.

Stammer, on his knee, saw the monsters on the left. The sight made him for a moment. Not a sound came from them as they rose to the attack like giant heads. When in the air they seemed to resemble kangaroos, they were heads, their bodies and their flippers taking the form of tails.

Though seen without time, and as these creatures of a lost world spared themselves no advantage, Stammer lay with his back to the scene that was his last as well as his lucky. He called out a word that those unbroken to his tongue, a word that he did not know he had uttered, but it told in its single exclamation the nearest classification of his fate.

"Paradise!"

They were not really phantoms, of course, for only in part did they resemble those giant, strong hands of past ages, they were heads, bodies that were made of various circles of unbroken skin. But as Stammer called out the name that sent of hypnotic revelation his head automatically turned at the one usually opposite him. Twice he pressed the trigger of the electric revolver, and twice he heard the muffled thud of the bullet striking its objective.

The beast seemed to collapse, its body shuddered, and it disappeared, and fell on its back and slipped to the ground, where it lay in confusion.

But the monster was leaped upon him, snatching him in its embrace and wrenching him with its claws. Yet Stammer's hand was ready for it. He had dropped his revolver in the attack as he was lifted over by the weight, but out of his mouth his long knife came leaping to his fingers.

He was his driving out he would have then a dead end in the terrible moment. He could stand against its monstrous wrath and enveloped his helmet in its capacious jaws. There was a grinding sound in Stammer's ears, a rattan that seemed to draw his helmet into that gap of death, and then the iron metal of the helmet rescued the pressure, while Stammer drew up his body to escape the blow from the head legs that he instinctively knew would follow.

It was all over in an instant. The pick of the hand had made the best a body could be. Stammer's knife had already sunk into the breast, and was withdrawn and plunged again and again into its throat and side. Mutilated by the pain—if it felt pain, which was questionable—the creature thrust him away, and he slid from its embrace with its lifeless staring his arm.

The seven legs were before his eyes, he could no longer observe any, but he felt the flames of fire from the knees and hands he spread, and then he was dropped with a thud and he heard a long sigh like the breathing of a stone pipe.

He made an effort to brace himself for the next attack, ready himself to his knees again, his knife poised. But there was no need to brace himself, there was no attack coming. He saw Kells standing over the fallen beast motionless in hand. Kells had arrived in the nick of time and had cut the creature through the base of the skull.

"Quick, Stammer! Other men coming!"

Ann to arm, dragging each other, they staggered forward as the humming of Devilman rushed through the tunnel.

The BLACK Vultures

Every age has its Pirates. The "Jolly Roger" was once the terror of the Seven Seas, the masked rider the menace of the highways. Today, kidnapers and smash-and-grab raiders defy the law. What of tomorrow—when the pirate will have at hand all the wonders of future science and mechanics?

★ THE VULTURES SHOW THEIR TEETH

WITH terrifying suddenness the stillness of the temple was shattered by the roar of a machine gun, the noise reverberating deafeningly as it was hurled back from pillars, doors and arches.

High velocity explosive bullets tore their way through the head, chest and belly of the god, ripping the metal as though it were paper.

The giant jointed arm and hand were shaken either through the crude machinery being worked at its operator being killed, and the bullets commenced to tear their awful, bloody way through the screaming, frantic monks.

Following the example of his guards, Derek dropped to his knees and fell flat on his face to avoid that deadly lead. From whence he lay he could see the dark forms of a group of men crouched by the machine gun in the shadows of the ornate entrance.

Suddenly the roar of the gun ceased, and as the last reverberating whirr of the revolving cartridges died slowly away, the sun and fair-haired Falso, crouched in thick leather flying ir, once striding from out of the shadows.

Snatched through the terrified monks he marched, and gripping the overhanging eaves by his papyrus vestments, pushed him to his feet.

"Release that man!" he said harshly, indicating the fettered Zoroaster. "If I hear him come to harm, then every one of ye shall die!"

The abbot made a flustering gesture with his claw like hands. He did not speak. He could not. Only cursing noises came from his bloodless lips.

But the monks understood what his meaningless means to convey, and whilst some rushed for a hiding, others disappeared behind the god, obviously to look to the machinery which controlled the arm and hand.

Why was there no resistance, one might ask. Why this ready obedience to Falso's impetuous command? The answer, indeed, was very simple.

The monastery ruled on Kao Hia had shown of what three decades of the place were capable with their terrible modern armaments of gun and gas, and the abbot and his monks decided what might now happen to them at the hands of these desperate men



As the giant fingers of the Buddha closed over their helpless victim, the silence of the temple was shattered by the roar of a machine gun. Pirates flung themselves down.

who had so strangely, was entry into their heavily guarded monastery.

There was that gun, for instance, and carrying them from the shadows by the candle. At the first battle move there was not the slightest doubt that it would bring again into savage and vicious life.

For these were desperate men, out to rescue their pastoral chief, Zoroaster, who had been captured after a raid on the temple of Kao Hia.

He had crashed while returning to his sky fastness, and had come upon Derek Graham, one of his own prisoners who had escaped from the dinghies by parachute.

Derek a member of the British Aeronautical Research Society, had been captured by the Vultures while they were raiding the town of Boshan. He had been offered a chance to join the Vultures—in death, but when the

Vultures had gone to loot the monastery, he had escaped.

Zoroaster and he had been trying to reach the frontier together when the priests of Buddha had captured them. They were being offered as a sacrifice to the god when Falso had come to the rescue.

Yes, these men would be desperate. The trembling monks unfettered Zoroaster and lowered him gently to the ground. He was quite unconscious, and his livid legs were marked with bloody scars.

As a show of respect from Falso, two of his men stepped forward from out the shadows and, after meeting Derek's hands, picked up the unconscious form of their leader.

"Take him to the machine!" ordered Falso.

Waiting until the men had withdrawn with

their burden. Falso turned again to the covering above.

"Due to stir one step outside the main way," he warned harshly, "and death shall greet thee in the darkness."

With that he touched Derk on the arm and together they turned and walked from the lounge, their retreat being covered by the deadly burst of the machine gun.

"Put this on!" said Falso, handing Derk a gas mask. "We won't run away by means of the gas, knowing that it would not prevent the heavy trouble outside."

But how they were home was none in the troupe!" said Derk anxiously.

Falso smiled, pointing to the adjustment of his gas mask.

"We learned it from the priest who guarded the door," he answered.

Followed by the machine-gun crew who carried down automatics to their hands, they passed through corridors thick with the yellow smoke of the gas.

Here and there they had to stop aside to avoid some headlight and blackboard flame being lit and sunk in death, but at length they passed out into the clear, fresh air of sight, and with an unobstructed relief Derk tore off his gas mask to let the cold wind play on his heated face.

"So you escaped from the airship?" said Falso, leading his way unobscured through the darkness to where the machine was parked down on the wind-swept plateau a mile away. "Where did you find Zoroaster?"

Derk told him, explaining how they had spent the day and how capture had come with the dusk.

"But it is an extraordinary thing to me," he concluded, "how you came to find us in this country of the ice."

"There is nothing extraordinary about it at all, my friend," replied Falso. "They don't see us, these monks, but they have some centuries-old and equally efficient means of spreading news. How it is done I do not know, but within an hour of your capture word of it must have been received in the farthest corner of Elise. When we landed in search of Zoroaster we expected for him at the tip of the Twink bay. It was not till out to force the truth out of the monks and his wife. They knew, and they told us that the pair of you were prisoners in this bay."

"And what it is to happen to me now?" asked Derk after they had walked on for some time in silence.

Falso shrugged his shoulders.

"That will be decided by Zoroaster," he replied.

"Is he still alive," connected Derk.

"Yes," answered Falso grimly. "If he still lives."

Again there was silence between them until the black shadow of the machine loomed up in the darkness ahead.

"Why didn't Boring lead this raid?" asked Derk. "Has he Zoroaster's second in command?"

"Yes, but he has a whole host of fear of these black-clothed monks," replied Falso.

"And I don't blame him for that," commented Derk dryly.

Reaching the black hangar Falso lost sight of Zoroaster, who was lying still and motionless on an improvised stretcher in the ground.

"I'm afraid he is in a bad way," he said, straitening up and turning to his men.

"Let him stay quietly at you can take the care of my men."

The men obeyed, and when he had seen Zoroaster made as comfortable as possible, Falso turned to Derk.

"You understand that I am taking you back aboard the airship," he said. "You will travel in the rear cockpit of Akia's machine. If you will give me your word that you will not attempt to interfere with him at the controls I will return from this long journey."

"I can't do that," said Derk.

"You refuse how easy it will be for me to have you locked to the gun mounting, and how uncomfortable that will be for you."

Derk smiled.

"Right," he said, for he realized that he had failed on other options. "I give you my word not to interfere with Akia."

A few moments later the black hangar was empty across the wind-swept plateau to meet up into the night sky.

Straggleton lights and some lights twinkling on wing tips and tails marked the course they took, and at three hundred feet Falso viewed the formation over the black belt of the ice.

His hand pressed on the bomb release and four high explosives bombs hurtled down into the darkness. Above the thunder of the explosion, came a sudden reverberating roar. Land fires and burning debris spread up from the doomed monastery.

Below from the other machine streaked down into that desolate, blazing zone, and when the formation had passed and was sliding swiftly up into the night all that remained of the bay was a blinding reflection burned in by the descent and aged old walls.

Derk brushed and Falso added.

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most have you handicapped and locked in a cabin."

"I suppose I am to be killed eventually?" said Derk.

"As I have told you," replied Falso, "this depends entirely upon Zoroaster, my father, even yourself. You will not be killed at your own risk."

"I will never put you," answered Derk.

"Which is singularly stupid of you," returned Falso. "I know we may be, but we are a goodly company. However, do you give us your parole not to attempt to escape?"

Derk gave it, for, as before, he realized that he had no option. To be handicapped and locked in his cabin would render any attempt at escape absolutely impossible, and would only mean destruction for himself.

A little later he sat on the long dining room table and his pilot enjoying a meal which would not have disgraced the menu of a first class hotel.

And northward looked the mighty air ship, decreasing space at a speed of three hundred miles an hour; northward towards its base, bearing with it its commander, too good eventually to be the finger of oblivion.

Where the land was Derk did not know, but, to the surprise, Falso answered the question without the slightest hesitation.

"Our base!" said Falso. "It is on the coast of Greenland, a few miles north of Hargrave Island. We shall reach it by dark tomorrow night."

And the following night, after hours of driving over a cold and desolate sea, the great airship came gliding down through the Arctic dark towards a long, black shore, flanked by snow-capped mountains in the white silence of a barren coast far from the haunts of men.

With a still which told of long practice, the airship was soon housed, and pilots and crew made their way to their respective berths.

Now that they were on the ground, Falso did not ask Derk to remain in parole, but had him taken to a comfortable room but furnished with a table, chair and camp bed, and stationed an armed guard over him.

And from that time he remained under a more despatched watch.

It was on the morning of the seventh day of his imprisonment that Falso walked into the hut.

"You are to come with me," he said with a smile. "Zoroaster is well enough now to take an interest in things, and he has decided the fate of you and Black Boring."

"Black Boring?" repeated Derk in surprise.

"Yes," replied Falso. "Zoroaster cannot forgive Boring's failure to lead the monastery, and he is dealing with him accordingly. But come, he wishes to speak with you himself."

Consequently Derk followed him across the frozen snow to a low-sloping furnished and carpeted hall, the atmosphere of which was warm with the heat of two glowing stoves.

Zoroaster was lying on a bank, and Derk surveyed him as he sat and studied the features of his face as he seemed to be in the mood to converse.

At a gesture from Falso, Derk stepped to the side of the bank. For long moments Zoroaster lay staring up at him, then his lips moved, and he spoke in a hoarse whisper.

"As we lived through it all. Will you give my salutations?"

Derk shook his head.

"No," he said, and he answered.

Again the first lips of Zoroaster moved, and so faint were the whispered words that Derk had to bend his head to catch them.

"After what we have passed through together I do not wish to see you die. So I am giving you a chance of life. You will take the air against that covered, Boring, to get to the shore. Only one of you will come down alive. If that be you, then you will remain here a prisoner until I demand my Vulture."

Derk shook his head.

"No," he said, and he answered.

Again the first lips of Zoroaster moved, and so faint were the whispered words that Derk had to bend his head to catch them.

"After what we have passed through together I do not wish to see you die. So I am giving you a chance of life. You will take the air against that covered, Boring, to get to the shore. Only one of you will come down alive. If that be you, then you will remain here a prisoner until I demand my Vulture."

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A Battle of Death in the Skies

"And if it be destiny!" demanded Derek.

"He will work in destiny as a mechanic," replied Zoruton.

His eyes sought those of Falc and quickly the latter stepped forward.

"Send them up!" whispered Zoruton.

* A COWARD GETS HIS DUE

STILL, severely comprehending at all, Derek quailed the lot with Falc.

"You quite understand," said the latter, leading the way towards white two of the squadron's fighting machines, now standing with engines ticking over. "You see to go up and fight Bontig. You will both flutter out at five thousand feet. I am accompanying you up in my machine, and will fire a red Vasey light which will be the signal for you to engage to battle."

"It is madness!" said Derek hoarsely. "It is a chance of life for which you should be grateful, mortal Falc. To be face with you, mortal Zoruton, nor myself have given up hope that you will join us. We do not doubt your courage, but this light will prove your ability as a fighting pilot. This is your machine."

"And if I refuse to go up and fight?" demanded Derek, taking by the little stream-lined plane.

"You will be shot within a quarter of an hour," retorted Falc.

Realizing that there was nothing else for it but to fight this gun duel with the headstrong Bontig, Derek donned the flying kit which a mechanic handed him and clambered into the cockpit.

Latter had he thought when he had undergone his Royal Air Force training back home in distant England that when he had learned what he put in as an airman at this

Huffed in heavy flying kit, Black Bontig was already ensconced on the cockpit of the other plane. He also was to fight for his very life, and he was grimly determined that he would send this Englishman down in flames.

After that he would work as a mechanic for Zoruton, whose chief lieutenant he had been. But he would only work until the chance of heavenly reward, then he would sail to the British Government these men whom once he had called comrades.

Swinging himself up into the cockpit of his fighting plane, Falc was the first to take off, roaring across the frozen snow to take the air in a steep upward climb.

Side by side Derek and Bontig followed him, climbing swiftly to ten thousand feet, where they distracted off. Falc continued to climb another thousand feet, and whilst those on the ground below watched with bated breath, a red Vasey light broke from his cockpit and floated downwards.

It was the signal for battle.

Working on rudder, Derek swung his machine towards that of Bontig, who was already coming at him with a whitehead rort. His engine, with a sudden rattle, the trigger of his synchronized gun, but deliberately he held his fire, and suddenly whipping forward the control stick went northwards in a thundering dive.

His roared right under Bontig's plane, then back came the control stick, and he went soaring up and up in a wild race as roll and shudder down on the now wilder whirling Bontig.

His engine was clamped tightly round the trigger of the gun, the cartridge belt was whirling madly through the chamber, and hot flame from the burning rounds lashed back beyond the cockpit windshield.

Sensing the death which was rearing down on him, Bontig took his machine on towards a wild, zigzag fire which tested to the utmost every flying wile and wile.

But only for seconds did he hold the chase before whipping back his control stick to go soaring up and up into the leaden greyness of the Austin sky.

Derek followed, sticking to him like a

hook, but Bontig had already rolled, and pulling a sharp zig-zag turn, drove straight at at Derek, his gun opening faces and a deadly stream of tracer bullets.

Derek's discomf was given as though by an invisible axe, and as he glanced swiftly backwards to see the whipping lightning of the bullets striking the metal aircraft wing. Instinctively he threw the plane into a spin, and at that same moment something like red-hot iron scored his scalp.

Bontig, his headless lips drawn back in wolfish grin, saw the leather clad form of Derek lurch drunkenly forward across the controls.

Releasing the pressure on the trigger of his gun, he pushed his control stick forward and went northwards in the wake of the plane which was spinning in destruction on the snow-covered cliffs below.

The gibbering and doubly maddened caused by the bullet which had scored Derek's scalp, was only momentary, however, and the rush of his air served to nerve him.

He was spinning, but he had plenty of height yet. Still, knowing his head as he lay sprawled across the controls, he had a glimpse of Bontig circling round him, selecting the most vulnerable spot for a final burst of bullets.

Curiously Derek's glazed figure closed on the throttle, and, reaching way behind him, he banded himself lock into his seat.

Simultaneously, he lurched on full throttle to counteract the spin and pulled the throttle open to full.

With a deafening roar of high-powered engine the palest little plane swept from out of the spin, and, coming on the crash, tore straight at at Bontig with synchronized gun flames.

Bontig backed wildly and, by aspect piloting, pulled clear of that deadly stream of bullets. Then, wheezing, he whipped forward his control stick and thundered down on Derek, who had fallen out of the climb into a tail slide.

His face was lined with fury, for the last few seconds had been a close call for him, and he knew it.

Derek did not need to glance over his shoulder to realize the death which was staring on his tail. He had one split second in which to act before he was either shot through the back by a stream of bullets or had his tail plane and rudder control were shot to ribbons.

Death in the air! What amazing adventures in next week's powerful story of the Plumes of the Future.



Derek went thundering down, his gun blasting a staccato accompaniment to the thunder of his engine.

The March of the Berserks



The conduct of Man is ruled by his ductless glands—those tiny bodies hidden in the human frame. Character, strength, energy, growth—all are just a matter of ductless glands. Many scientists believe that a man's characteristics can be changed—a criminal become a philanthropist, a weak man strong—by treatment of the glands; but who knows what strange pranks Nature can play on those who invade her domain? Here is a startling story of a man who sought to battle with Nature

* A GAMBLE IN HUMAN LIVES

THE island was a story dot in the Azores group, 1,000 miles or less west of Ireland, and now loaned to Professor Reginald Mente by the Portuguese Government.

It stood alone, surrounded by the placid blue waters of the Atlantic, the other islands only visible as mere specks on the horizon.

There was a little bay on the southern shore, with rock jet headlands, and around the island were great luxuriant masses of green vegetation. The bay was a natural harbor, the water being of such depth that the big liner, *Astoria*, had no difficulty in making her way in and securing a safe anchorage.

Two thousand men, eager, eager, crowded the great vessel's decks, their gaze directed toward the shores of this tiny land, which was to be their future home.

And on the bridge stood Professor Mente himself, a tall, distinguished man with the eyes of a dreamer. Perhaps there was a hint of lunaticism, too, in the depths of his burning gaze as he gazed across the limited expanse of Martin Island.

"Well, sir, it looks good," said a blond voice at his elbow.

Professor Mente started and turned. Captain Hanson was a bluff sailor, and ever since the liner had slipped out of London River he had had his doubts regarding this remarkable voyage.

"For your passengers, good captain, it is the island of Iloilo," said the professor imperiously. "These unfortunate young men, for the first time in their lives, will have a real chance. Here, in the zone of sunshine, they will be permitted to hold up their vineyard-planted bodies. This will become men. You understand me, Captain?" His eyes positively blazed. "Men? Real men? Men such as the world has never before seen?"

"I hope you're right," said the Captain good-humoredly.

It was not his business to discourage the professor, so he kept his private thoughts to himself. This great experiment, noble as it was, did not greatly impress him. The professor was certain of success, but others were, more practical, had their doubts. Time alone would show.

Five months past Great Britain had talked of Professor Reginald Mente and his ambitious experiment. From north, south, east, and west men had come to join his expedition. Not all of them had been accepted, for these were conditions. The stranger was had been rejected, those with family ties had been rejected. Only the contrasts, the ill-mannered, the weak, had found favor in Professor Mente's eyes.

Two thousand of the very best of the decks of the *Astoria*—poor, starved-looking, half-starved creatures whom the world had used to

Not one of them was older than twenty-five, and the majority were youths of between eighteen and twenty. An army of half-a-million of humanity's drags.

"You think I am a dreamer?" said the professor, turning abruptly to his companion. "Believe me! Give me six months, and when you return with my own batch of recruits you will have the greatest surprise of your life."

Captain Hanson laughed.

"Admitting that the climate is sunny and warm, I can't quite see how you can justify your high hopes, Professor," he replied.

"Still, go ahead—good luck to you. This business is costing you a pretty penny, and, as a philanthropic act, I should say it stands second to none. We could do with more men like you in the world, sir."

Other men had said the same thing. Professor Mente was spending a fortune on his experiment. A notorious British subject, he had made his name wealth out of his chemical discoveries, which had been marketed by a British company. That wealth he was now lavishly expending for the good of his adopted country. He was an business man, and money had no more to him. He was a scientist, and, finding money in his hands, he was using it to realize his own dreams.

At the back of the bay there was a venerable township of long wooden buildings—many here, in fact, of the most modern type. For months British contractors with their men had been at work on Martin Island, preparing this ideal camp. Here the youths, who had never known comfort and plenty, would become accustomed to both.

These had been much head-shaking amongst politicians in England because the professor's projects were picked from England's drags. None could imagine their physical condition. But what of the brain, many cynically asked, which controlled these "animals"? Would this care-free, open-air life cure their mental warped as well as their rickety bodies?

Others sang not from the drags as the authorities gained a full sight of their future homes. The camp was well ordered, and to the left and right of the buildings there were splendidly laid out recreation grounds.

Behind lay the virgin country, which, during the course of months, the professor's "children" were to convert into profitable market gardens. Here they would grow exotic fruits for the English market, and the entire profits would go to their own pockets. For there was to be no slacking here. The men would work, but their hours would be regulated.

Tax discrimination was a long job, and what it was going on Professor Reginald Mente went where it was.

He was met by three men, clean shaven

young men in white flannels. One, the elder of the three, was Dr. John Carlson, whom Mente had taken from one of the great London hospitals, and at a stroke had converted from a merely house-surgeon into a three-thousand-pounder young man. He was Mente's right hand, and the passengers with him were his assistants, fresh, earnest young doctors who had lately been little more than students.

"So!" exclaimed Mente, after they had exchanged greetings. "My friends, it is the day! See! Our subjects are here."

He was pointing towards the pier. He did not use the word "subjects" as a long sight saw it, but as a doctor. The two thousand men were not human beings, but just—subjects. There was no philanthropic about him, but the greatest scientific experiment any doctor had ever conceived.

They went up the beach through the camp—with its wide "streets" of sunny lanes—to a square, square building in the center, a building of solid brick, with iron-barred windows and a single massive door. It was the laboratory, a place of silver-colored equipment, with tiled walls and floor, with porcelain benches, X-ray apparatus, operating theatre, and, in fact, every facility for dealing with disease and injury.

There the laboratory staff were the assistants of the three young doctors. For Professor Mente had never lost sight of the fact that his "subjects" were ill-mannered, many of them diseased. In this island haven they would be cured. Carlson and his two assistants would have all their work cut out from this day forward.

There was a subtle change in the professor's manner after he had closed the great door. He was alone with his assistants—known the result of all eyes and ears. The fanned light in his eyes had increased, and his hair, another face had become bearded.

"We are ready, yes!" he said, in a low, vibrant voice. "Really, my young friends, to-day we start the most amazing experiment ever attempted by man—upon humanity. Of the results there can be no question. Success is certain."

"I wish I could agree with you, Professor," said Carlson, his manner becoming grave and earnest. "Why are you sure?"

A shadow of anger crossed the professor's face.

"Are you doubting my ability?" he asked harshly. "Have I not experimented for years in the obscurest secret of my Island research laboratory? Have I not met with unqualified success?"

"Forgive me, sir," said Carlson. "But you have hitherto experimented upon animals—"

"Pah! In these few differences!" broke in the professor excitedly. "The organism of an animal is no different from the organism of a human. Science with one means success with the other. Already I can see



Every man was weighed and examined minutely once a week. Slowly the strange work went on.

One island peopled by two thousand perfect men. Back next to the world has never before seen—giants of strength. Super men of bones and muscle, with clean minds and healthy nerves. I tell you, Carlson, there can be no failure. As work seasons work we shall see the change. The world will marvel, but we, knowing the secret cause, will be calm, and will patiently wait the complete fruits of success.

"By Heaven! If only you see right!" said Carlson, his eyes glowing.

"That?" asked the scientist. "There is no 'if'! Carlson. We must succeed or we shall be the laughing stock of the world. Remember, our real experiment is being conducted in secret. Even the men themselves will not know that we are introducing special vitamins into their food. Why are they so physically underdeveloped? It is all a question of glandular development. The tiny glands of the human body, unprotected by the doctors of old, are the true cause of all human ailments. Feed these glands, and feed them in the right way, and illness vanishes.

"Why are men so helplessly dwarfed? Are they broken different from other brutes? It seems that some kind of forced draught makes their minds convulse with brilliance. The only real difference is that their digestive glands are peculiarly affected. There are the tiny thyroid glands in our heads—the pituitary glands; the thyroid gland and the parathyroid glands in our throats. The two suprarenal glands in our bodies provide strength and energy. Without these glands our bodies would be no better than lumps."

Science has made these discoveries, sir,

I agree," said Carlson, "but Science is still groping."

"I am not groping!" interrupted Professor Meets calmly. "And my object in bringing two thousand men to this island is merely to test their pituitary glands. They will know nothing of it; the world will know nothing of it. These tiny glands, started just two inches behind the root of the nose, are extraordinarily sensitive to treatment. If the gland is fed on one side, and starved on the other, what happens? The subject develops amazing beauty, he becomes indifferent to pain. His skin tends to turn yellow. If the position is the other way about, and the opposite gland has the balance upset, then the subject becomes sensitive, fearful of pain, cowardly."

"Most men of science know nothing of the pituitary gland compared with my own knowledge. For years I have worked—and now, at last, I am on the eve of the greatest triumph in human history. By experiment I have discovered a method of developing the pituitary glands with absolute certainty, simply by the introduction of certain vitamins into the man's food, they will undergo a gradual change—a change which will become less gradual as time goes on. Here, in this laboratory, my friends, we have the necessary apparatus. It is only to be expected that a few selected subjects will develop abnormal traits. These subjects will be given special treatment in order to keep them normal."

"You think then, that the majority of the men will change in exact accordance with your calculations?" asked Dr. Carlson. "But what of the men with diseased

glands? Is it not possible that abnormally will show itself? A victim of abnormally, when the disease becomes acute, becomes lumpy and hideous; his face no longer resembles that of a human being, but becomes more than of a horse. And with these physical characteristics the brain changes, too."

"Why do you talk of disease?" asked Professor Meets impatiently. "If some of the men are diseased they will be cured. There can be no such failure when the pituitary gland is treated scientifically and in accordance with a rigid, regulated system. No, no, Carlson, there is nothing to fear. I have worked it all out, and I know just what I am doing. Work! Only a few weeks will elapse before you begin to see the change."

Later, they went out to inspect the newly founded men. A remarkable-looking group, indeed. Ill-nourished, narrow bodied, most of them had a hanging back. But they were happy, they were smiling in their good fortune.

This was no prison camp, but a place where they were their own masters. There were no guards to look after them, no employers to give them orders. They were free—as free as the birds in the air.

And in gratitude to Professor Meets they showed as readily as their underdeveloped lungs would allow them.

In a very short time they had become organized, women men were given work as cooks, others became ship workers, and so forth. The camp became a hive of energetic, enterprising industry.

For several days after that the men were mostly engaged in bringing stores closer from the boat. And with every meal they took their pituitary glands, unknown to them, were treated in accordance with Professor Meets's carefully worked out system.

For two months Professor Meets remained at the camp in full command.

At the end of this period he revealed his objects with transparent ease. There were about fifteen, too—for every man of the two thousand had his own card. Every man was weighed and measured once a week, and a careful record was kept. If the professor was enthusiastic, Dr. Carlson, and his assistants were no less so.

"Two months to-day, sir—the six months," said Carlson, as he approached the scientist. "And what an amazing change."

"My dear Carlson, you have seen nothing yet," chuckled the professor, as he looked through his glasses. "I will admit that the development has been even more rapid than I expected, but one good addition will be further manifested as the weeks go by. Science is now amazed."

"By Jove, sir, I believe you," said Carlson, almost breathlessly. "You must let me see for my mother's sake."

"Yes! It is nothing," interrupted the other. "Scientific men all over the world would consider me mad if they knew what I was doing. But they don't know, Carlson, and that's our little secret, ah? The world shall know nothing of the real truth until our success is complete."

He went to one of the windows and stared out, his eyes were glowing with intense satisfaction. What he was was astonishing enough.

The great camp was very different now. Glorious flower beds had sprung up as though by magic and were filled with gay blossoms. There was order and discipline everywhere. Scores of men, dressed only in shorts, were at work about the camp, the men's body was kept in the great first suburbs and market gardens of the island.

A strange, warning in the island after the two months' silence would surely have been the evidence of his own eyes. For the "dove and cat" who had come on the good fare went no longer in evidence. The men who worked about the camp were trimly, tanned Apollo.



Seeking their ghastly vengeance, the Berserks burst in through the windows of the laboratory. Death was waiting for the assistants of Professor Sigmund Meats.

Continuing . . .

The March of the Berserks

raged. It was in accord with the small within Professor Meira's brain.

The island at last—a sandy one on the horizon.

Professor Sigmond Meira, on the bridge, stared through his binoculars. He was a mere shadow of his former self, for the days of anxiety and nights of sleeplessness had taken their toll.

Time and again, during this voyage he had called himself a fool for acting so impulsively. He should have waited in England until the storm had subsided; then he could have chartered a plane with ease. He would have been at the island much—much sooner. But it was too late now.

Captain Benson had done his best; he had broken all the Atlantic records for speed, and every officer and man aboard was aglow with excitement. They all knew that something had gone wrong with Professor Meira's experiment, though they didn't know quite what that something was.

And when at last the liner cautiously entered the protected bay, officers and men were standing at the rails, staring towards the beach.

"Look at it! The trouble came from the ship, sir," said Captain Benson, with a shrill bark at the professor. "There's been a cyclone here, I should say."

"Why, yes," exclaimed Meira, with intense relief. "So! Perhaps, then, I made the mistake. My staff are. Perhaps my plans were useless. Yet . . . My poor camp! How terrible!"

They were gazing upon a scene of wreckage and destruction. The tents, formerly so trim and neat, were all shattered. It was as though a tornado had swept over the island. Everywhere wreckage was to be seen.

And, as nature seems to be unkind, no living soul was within sight. It was like an island at sea.

As the liner came to her anchor, it was seen that many of the long wooden buildings had been burned. It was the same with the white brick laboratory. The walls were scorched, the roof was full of gaping holes. It was a mere shell—a ruin.

"The monster!" muttered Professor Meira. "What monster? Where? What? Where has taken place in this paradise?"

He had scarcely known what to expect, but the actuality alarmed him, though it brought him relief at the same time. There had been some disaster at the camp, but perhaps things were not so bad as they seemed. The professor had had faith—such faith that he scarcely dared to put his thoughts into words.

Before the great anchor chain was swung through the lower holes, the liner's voice-horn was ready, and the professor went ashore with an officer and half a dozen men. It was blindingly hot, although the morning was early, the sun was beating down with relentless power like a broken sky. Not a breath of wind stirred and over the island came a hot, oppressive smothering silence.

Professor Meira was the first to step ashore onto the long, sandy beach. He carried up the beach, steady beach, and in his mind's eye he saw the camp as he had left it four months ago. Now . . .

He was aware of a strange, unpleasant color, sickening, nauseating, which hung in the air, stifling air.

As Meira walked on, the sailors just in his rear, he felt a strange reluctance. His usual in reasonable terror. Knowing the character of his great experiment—knowing the dreadful result if anything should have gone wrong—he was afraid. He was radically reluctant to advance further, and as again he found his limbs. His imagination had got into its power . . .

"Marching away in the left, sir," said one of the men.

His staff, present were seemed to steady the professor's nerves. He went to the left with the others. There were exclamations of horror, and Meira, coming to a standstill, found himself looking down upon—three skeletons.

"My God!" muttered the officer, shaken to the marrow.

He needed no telling that the skeletons had been lying there not many days earlier. The sun had done its work—the sun and perhaps the sea breeze . . . One horrifying fact was that most of the skeletons' bones were broken.

Here and there scraps of dried flesh were adhering. There were tattered scraps of clothing, too.

"Carlton," muttered Professor Meira, like a man in torment. "My dear young friends—"

"Heaven!" Look at the state of these skeletons! The poor chaps must have been battered to death. Their arms and legs are broken, their ribs stove in, their skulls cracked—"

"But they?" broke in the professor sharply. "Why?"

He hesitated, he had the answer—but he dared not voice it. He looked back at the five faces, at the skulls bent near the water's edge. He wanted to run towards it—

"Look!" screamed one of the officers.

Professor Meira swung round—and then he saw just what he had feared to see. His men really were skeletons; were their very postures which he recognized in his mind.

From the tops of the back of the camp figures were emerging.

An first it was not possible to believe that they were human figures. The creatures were gigantic, nine and ten feet in height—and as knotted in proportion. They were covered with coarse, matted hair, and suddenly the air became thick with vile, nauseous breath—and what made the scene more revolting, the skeletons were that actual words were being spoken.

"It's him—it's him!" came one howling, guttural cry.

"Run for your lives, men!" shouted the officer.

They needed no second telling. Like madmen, they ran and ran for the boat. But Professor Sigmond Meira stood still, facing the oncoming horde. He was like a man breath of his wife. He stood petrified.

Not until it was too late did his companions realize that they had left him behind.

The professor's face had gone gray—for in that second he knew that his great experiment was a colossal failure—a failure, ghastly failure. These creatures which swept down upon him were like the Berserks of old.

He understood something of what had happened; their primitive glands had been developed in some way, and, as a result, they had almost lost their human shape.

They were more like werewolves. Mercifully, their enormous forms were half covered with hair. They had eyes, nose, mouth—but they were nightmare creatures. Caricatures of humans—a thousand times more terrifying than the most fiendish goblins of the jungle.

By spending their carefully regulated glands, the treatment had made these primitives men develop with amazing rapidity from hideous Apes into human beings. Carlton had seen it coming, but for some reason he had been unable to give a full warning.

Perhaps he had been captured and held prisoner. No man would ever know what had actually happened on this island of horror during the past six or eight years.

For Dr. Carlton and his assistants were dead—and the others . . . Perhaps the abrupt cessation of Professor Meira's treatment had accelerated the monstrous transformation.

With terrible cries the Berserks swept down the beach. And Professor Meira came suddenly to his senses. He ran forward to meet the advancing horde, both hands outstretched.

"No, no!" he cried. "Have faith!"

What I have done I can undo! I will cure you, restore you to your former shape."

But his voice was unheard in the fearful tumult. The next moment the vengeance of giants was upon him. He was swept off his feet and cast high into the air.

He fell into a sea of upturned hairy arms, and the mass which came over him like the waves of hell howled.

"Kill him! Kill him!" went up the thousand voices.

Enormous hands, fingers wrapped themselves round the arms and legs of Professor Sigmond Meira; and he had not more than a few seconds to live.

*BERSERKS SAIL FOR BRITAIN

"GREAT HEAVEN! Look, sir!" gasped the doctor's first officer.

Captain Benson turned pale.

"But they can't hurt us, Mr. Hammond!" he said anxiously. "Quick! Give orders for the ladder to be raised! Get the anchors up. Manned God, they mean to attack!"

He had failed to realize, at the first sight of the dreadful army, that he was looking at human beings—men, with entire intelligence—men whose shapes had been made hideously monstrous—and men whose brains had been developed, too. These hairy creatures were no perceptive animals, but cunning, scheming men who had made definite plans for their work in advance.

Professor Meira was dead; he had died instantaneously, the first victim of the Berserks' fury. Now the horde was taking to the water, and the bodies were swimming with incredible speed. The whole bay was a mass of foam, as the gigantic swimmers came nearer and nearer to the liner.

Even now the officers and men of the vessel did not realize that they were in any danger. But the decks were for them the sea level, helplessly beyond the reach of the animal crew.

"On—on!" shouted a third, gaffled voice. "Hush is dead. The liner is torn!"

"To England—to England!" went up another cry.

It was awful to hear such intelligent shouts coming from these automatons. They knew—only the devil could know—the habitual change which had been wrought in them. They were paid with fury—they were men with a terrible grievance.

Week after week these creatures had grown worse and worse; their food supplies had given out, for as they grew their appetites were doubled, tripled, and food had become scarce. But there was plenty aboard the liner—plenty more in England. In England, too, they would demand reparation for the cruel wrong which had been done them.

Yet, with their intelligence, they were fierce, ferocious; they were aware of their terrific strength, and they meant to use it. Fear and bloodshed should pay their debt to justice, for they were in their own terrible strength, and they were backed by the power of the British Empire.

In that case, two thousand strong, with the exception of a mere handful which had died, that Professor Meira's treatment had been systematically applied was proved by the fact that all his victims revealed identical symptoms.

The foremost Berserks were already at the liner's bow, and the ship, on deck, was now looking over the rail, their faces changed with incredulity and horror. But they did not fear, they looked down upon the Berserks in a detached kind of way—as one might look at a savage tiger from the safe side of a iron bar.

Then, in a moment, the situation changed. For strong ropes, with hooks attached, came whirling overhead from the rail, and the Berserks were prepared! As the hooks caught a hold, the Berserks were swinging up, shaking with the agility of forest cats.

There was no stopping them. They ran and towards the deck with land, roaring shouts.

The Berserks Sail for England

Not in one place, but in two or three headwinds, the grappling hooks had passed severe tests in less than a minute. It seemed, the situation had become desperate. Captain Ransom shouted his orders, and the men grabbed any kind of weapon which came handy to the hand. But there was not a firearm aboard the ship—and none in the history of mankind had ever been needed as they were needed now.

The soldiers behaved valiantly; they flung themselves at the foremost Berserks as the latter came climbing aboard. It needed the utmost courage, for at close quarters the hairy monsters were terrifying to behold. It seemed incredible that the more inter-

There was no stopping this human avalanche—the human tide, in spite of all appearances. Ransom braved continuing and galling blows, armed solely!

"Surrender!" came the guttural command of the Berserks leader—the one of the blood creatures seemed to have full control of its companions. "Surrender this ship!"

"Never!" roared Captain Ransom from the bridge.

"We sail to England—to obtain justice!" thundered the Berserk. "Look at us! Do you see what your science has done?"

Captain Ransom bowed over the rail; he was astounded to find that the creatures were capable of intelligent conversation.

report. At last not a Berserk remained in the ship. Nearly two thousand of the men, standing over the liner, penetrating to the engine-rooms, the stoke-holds, the kitchens. And the men fell before them—men who were normally brave enough.

Within half an hour the splendid *Detonax* was in the hands of the animal-men. And on the island were some scores of armed officers, A.B.'s, engineers, stokers and stewards. Many had drowned. The rest could only watch in stupefied bewilderment.

For they saw the anchors raised; they saw the great liner's propellers just churning. The sea would surely bring her, even now, that the gross monsters were among the stoke-holds and engine-rooms—and taking complete control of the liner.

Yet, amongst those two thousand there were men with engineering knowledge and skill; there were other men who had been sailors. They had not forgotten, for their brains were not dulled, although their bodies had become transformed. In this emergency they were able to take the *Detonax*, man her and get her under way.

True, the liner nearly scraped a reef of rock in getting out of the bay, but, assisted by a miracle, she escaped disaster and reached the open water.

And so she sailed—a free ship, with the most horrific crew in the history of the world!

★ THE INVASION OF KENT

FOLKESTONE was crowded with curious onlookers, and most of them, on this hot, sultry evening, were staring out into the busy Channel.

It was fairly late, and darkness was descending. A great heat was visible—very much hotter than ships of her size usually carry. For at least in two weeks she had sailed erratically, she had appeared as though from nowhere, out of the Channel, and now she was apparently heading for Folkestone. Her crew officials and passengers were amazed—they knew that such a ship could never berth.

As for the marine visitors, they were agog with pleasant astonishment. This was something different—something to talk about when they returned home.

There had been quite a lot, lately, in the papers concerning the extraordinary behavior of Professor Raymond Meena's chartered liner, *Detonax*. It was known that the vessel had left England in a hurry, over a week ago.

Afterwards, she had been sighted in the Atlantic. And it was a singular fact that she had refused to answer all signals, and she had slowed away from any ship which had shown signs of approaching her. Wireless messages were useless, for she refused to answer.

Little did the light-hearted holiday makers know of the turmoil which was even then taking place at the Admiralty, and in other Government offices! For shipowners, taking their vessels to leave the Channel that day, had made startling reports by means of radio.

Some declared that they had seen huge animals walking free about the *Detonax's* decks; others reported that the great ship was apparently manned by creatures, for she had sailed serenely towards tremendous submarines, and had only slowed going aground by chance. She took no notice of



freedom with a tiny planet could have wrought this appalling change. Yet, as definitely balanced as the human machine, that when one interferes so grossly with it as Professor Meena had done—that the results are likely to be overwhelmingly drastic.

With filthy, bestial cries, the Berserks piled aboard. The blood oozed as there seemed to have no end. They apparently did so pain, and they were so vast that the strongest blows were ineffective. The defenders felt very much as one might feel who attacks a rhinoceros with a walking stick.

The soldiers were caught up in the great hairy hands. They were tossed earthward, to splash into the sea, far below.

Already two of those headless Berserks were aboard, swimming over the decks, attacking every man and officer they encountered. Some of the men fled into the engine-rooms, but the Berserks charged, and drove them to pieces. Men were dragged out and flung earthward. Those who were wise went without resistance; those who tried to fight back died.

"Kill him—kill him!" went up the thunderous shout, and the soldiers men swept the Professor off his feet and buried him high into the air.

"Listen to me!" he exclaimed. "Behave yourselves, and I will give you passage home."

"No, no!" went up a massive chorus. "We will trip you—Meena and Deena trusted us! Away with him!"

A score of Berserks charged the bridge. . . . It was all over within a minute. Captain Ransom and his officers, fighting to the last, went overboard to join their unfortunate crew.

And still they came, swimming up the

The Ruthless Army Invades England

signals, and her roars up the Channel had been heard.

There was even more startling news, for a second and a destroyer, curious on account of the Japanese behaviour, had approached. And without warning the lines had changed her course, and at full speed had entered the smaller vessel. She had cut the destroyer's lines in two and had swept on ruthlessly. Now she was off Folkstone and swinging round with the evident intention of striking in the harbour.

Small wonder that Admiralty officials were forwarding serious messages!

But before anything could be done the war became arrested in England's history had begun.

On curve the line, now at full speed. Apparently, the animal was half thought of looking for Deyan, but for some reason they changed their plan. They sent the Deyan back where all Folkestone.

The crowds of holiday-makers on the beach and the explosions distinctly heard the dull, grinding thud as the mighty vessel went aground. Her masts snapped like reeds, and the waves heaved wildly. A dozen motor-boats that sat, some of them filled with excited visitors. But soon they came reeling back, and their bows, terrible as

Monsters assume from the lures had jumped into the sea—not hatchery, but those.

wave! Now they were swimming alone. The sea was alive with them. In the glare of darkness it was impossible to see much; and most people discounted the apparently absurd rumours. The crowds on the beach were thicker and darker.

But when the alarm took definite shape, it exploded like a bomb-shell, for out of the new came the shaggy ramscreeters, looking more terrible than ever in the half light. At the first sight of these women, fed screaming, and men screamed, too. No man in their lives had they seen such a dread sight as this.

All in a moment, it seemed, Folkstone was in a panic. The thing which had first seemed a novel experience was turning out to be a nightmare. To increase that nightmare-like effect, a violent thunderstorm broke. An intense darkness shut down, which was only relieved, now and again, by vivid flashes of lightning. Run in terror, descended, and people ran like frightened rabbits for their holes and boarding houses.

And on the beach the *Barnacles* collected— that whole formidable army. Then they came marching along the front, into the town—the most appalling scene ever seen by human eyes.

Terror reigned. For the Berserks were bent on destruction, they ransacked the shops, setting all ablaze which came to their hands.

birds - Sheepkeepers and analysts fed on their approach.

Strong looks of police, ever faithful to duty, charged at the invaders in vain. In such a crisis as this the authorities scarcely knew what to do. The whole thing had happened without warning, they were caught

The attack was a failure, for as the cars charged into the ranks of the animals—some of them were quickly brought to a standstill. Some of the horses went down, and one or two were injured. The others raised an uproar of dismay, and with guttural cries and frantic gestures—altered in plain English—they told the cars in their mighty hands and wrecked them.

The policemen were seized, hung into the air, and tossed from hand to hand. Many were killed in the execution of their duty. Others managed to get away. But nothing could stop that grim, determined onslaught of the Bolsheviks.

The shaman, backed by men, and when it was discovered that the Indians were intent upon taking the road to Lumbor, were forced upon retreat. At Lumbor, on the road, was a stopped and lay hidden. The shaman sprang ahead. In following the shaman led left a trail of destruction behind them—bet, particularly, the area was limited, for they had no grudge against the town and had no intention of remaining there. Lumbor was their objective—and they took the road in a great, graceful bend.

For if the antelopes were organizing, so were the Bernards. They were like animals, yet they had the intelligence of cunning men. They formed into a great column, which filled the road from side to side as they went marching on.

As now the thunderstorm was over, and the night sky was spangled with stars. On went the Bembels, carrying improved torpedoes, which flared and tumbled. It was a picture which could never be erased from the memories of those who saw it.

★ THE COMING OF THE HERSERKS

LONDON heard the news, like the special editions of the evening papers, with astonishment—and disbelief.

Most people looked upon it as a newspaper stunt. For the story sounded preposterous. Two thousand Bessie's like lambs, goats of one and ten foot, killers all, mauling on London!

And the Londoners read the news, discussed it, and carried on. They were justified in being more or less indifferent, for there was very little chance that the invaders would ever reach the great Metropolis.

But the situation down in the country was different.

As the Germans advanced, they sacked and burned every village they passed through. The inhabitants, warned in advance, fled for safety. A few, however, stubbornly refused to believe in the danger. They remained behind—to perish undoubtedly.

Scarcely a pause was made by the human monsters. They rambled into shops, took all the available food, then set fire to the houses and villages, and marched on. Michael was in their hearts—as their distorted brains. These uneducated men were not mad; they were capable of thinking, of reasoning, and their objective was definite.

But they could not prevent themselves from biting, from deriding. It was in their very blood, and they did not realize that they were doing wrong. Had they been powerful, they would have gained the sympathy and pity of these fellow countrymen. But for weeks, as they had seen themselves grow more and more hideous, they had received a hatred of all normal humanity.

"Destiny—destiny!" was their cry.
 "We have strength! We are the masters!"
 So on they went, relentless, ruthless,
 Inexorable, till after once they are



A Weekly up-to-the-minute News Feature on Matters Inter-Planetary

Contributed by P. E. CLEATOR (President of the British Society of Plant Pathologists)

Münster 2

WHAT has happened to Zdravěk Čermák, the Czechoslovakian rocket experimenter? He cannot be traced!

In any case I have some photographs of his experiments, which were carried out at Prague in 1899 and 1900. But my efforts to communicate with him have failed. Recently, I caught the aid of Herr Willy Ley, of Berlin, but this friend has no news to offer.

It appears that Gromasch was a member of the old German Inter-Planetary Society, the Verein für Raumschiffahrt E.V., four years ago. Since those letters addressed to him have all been returned, marked "Fests,"

It seems very strange that he should have gone without leaving any trace at all and with the suggestion that he has secretly departed for the Moon cannot be taken seriously. It is possible that his experiments may have proceeded fairly.

At the time of writing I am still trying to find out exactly what has happened to him.

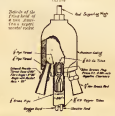
A Dictionary of Rocketry

MOST inventions and new ideas introduce fresh words, or give new meanings to existing words, and the science of sociology is no exception.

Already technical advances have made necessary the writing of expositions of special significance to the new science.

The latest issue of "Astronomical" (the official publication of the American Institute of Planetary Society) gives a list of such words. And as it seems likely that writers will use them in their stories in the not too distant future—just as the words "joyride," "holopin" and the like, have become everyday expressions—I reproduce the following for the benefit of Science readers.

Abstracts	source of extra-terrestrial or 'alien' life
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[illegible]

Total Area of Four National Monuments = 8,992 sq. mi. of Forest
 Area of the Angeles National Monument = 2,000 " "
 Area of Channel Islands = 100,000 " "

countered great hordes which had been evicted across the roads—hordes of barbed wire, machine guns, and machine-like. Ditching, machine, machine, behind to watch the prisoners, even tried to tell the story.

For they were sent, and the very sight of them set the animals into fresh outbreaks of Bessie fury. The soldiers were chased, and not one succeeded in getting away. For their progress could not with its terrible speed, in spite of their chains. Bessie came swiftly, with soldiers, horns of violence. Strong firm laborers of muscle and bones were throttled and crushed as a normal man might destroy the life of a rabbit.

The hordes were thrown aside without difficulty, and much of the material which had been used in their manufacture was now utilized for the manufacture of further such hordes.

Such resistance did great harm, for the Bessies knew that every man's head was against them. Their disordered fury increased, and they searched on, determined to give no quarter. All men who resisted them should die.

They covered the ground rapidly, for their soldiers were so great that they could walk with twice the speed of an ordinary man. Thus, the advance took villages and towns almost by surprise, as in swept the destroyers invaders.

Behind them, in the black night, lurid flames marked their passage. And ahead the warning had gone, and men, women and children were deserting their homes, flying across the countryside for their lives. Before long, Bessies had the houses scattered into single village streets, in fact deserted houses and shops. They worked then Bessie fury unrelenting.

Meanwhile, the authorities were moving. The Air Ministry, appalled by the police, sent scouting aeroplanes from one of the big northern aerodromes. Lieutenant Horn 131 was one of the first in the zone. Flying a fast scouting machine, he easily picked up the trail of the invaders; and swooping low, he turned a big searchlight towards the ground.

And as he flew rapidly over the worried roads he saw the animal faces staring up at him, he saw gigantic shakings. It was a sight which shocked him.

Fellowes' father was a West End sportsman, and the Bessie himself had been trained as a doctor. He knew, at the very first glance, that there was no hope for the women patients. Never could they be returned to their normal shape. The damage which had been done could never be undone. For although you can play tricks with Nature, there is a limit to Nature's patience. Bessie, released, can be as hideously harmful as it can be kindly loving.

Fellowes flew back to his aerodrome, and without delay he made his report to Squadron-Leader Williams, who was in command.

"I've seen them, sir," gasped Fellowes. "Hornet 131 saw them again hundreds of times put in my dream."

"As bad as that, are they?"

"Worse, sir—worse than your imagination could ever picture," said the young aviator.

"There's only one thing for me to do. We've got to go on with heads!"

"We can't do a thing like that unless direct orders from the Air Ministry," replied the older, shaking his head. "These men are our own countrymen, Fellowes. They are the victims of a scientific mad dream."

"They're not men now, sir," interrupted Fellowes urgently. "They'll never be men again. Don't you realize that they're marching straight on Canterbury? They're burning every village along the road since they left Folkestone. They'll leave Canterbury just the same—and the great cathedral will go as in Berlin, too!"

"I'll let you be mad," said Oldscrope, biting his lip. "There's no stopping the Bessies—and once they are here to the town is lost, no man could save it. But we can't let them go, Fellowes. We must wait for orders."

Lawrence at Folkestone went out into the open air, feeling. His own people owned a fine old house in Canterbury. It was his home. It had been the home of the Fellowes' family for generations. Thus he had a personal interest in this dreadful night's adventure. He had seen the Bessies—and he knew that nothing could stop them except death.

Meanwhile, in the Government offices of Whitehall, agitated Cabinet Ministers were in conference. Each man to time the event of the night had come to them; and now the Minister for War, in the silence of the Premier was in charge.

"Gentlemen, further talk is useless," he said, almost harshly. "We must act—now and at once!"

"Can the police do nothing?" asked one of the other Ministers.

"The police? Oh what are we police against these ten thousand—men with the strength of half a dozen gorillas?" demanded the War Minister. "You don't want to understand the danger. These animals—for they are no less—are determined to march on London. They have intelligence—they are marching in column fashion. They are destroying all before them."



As the plane went roaring over the hideous army the bomb exploded with a mighty flash in the very midst of the monsters.

"Yes, there must be some way of dealing with them—without being too drastic," said the Minister of Health. "Gentlemen, gentlemen, we cannot continue destroying these unhappy creatures. They are very, like ourselves. None, by his incredible folly, has wrought this hideous change. Cannot science stop it and save these poor fellows? With proper treatment it is conceivable that they can be fully restored."

"But how to stop them—and capture them?" asked the War Minister. "While we talk, they advance. Certainly, it would be easier to kill them all, for a company of soldiers, with machine guns, could mow them down. But that is unthinkable."

The discussion was interrupted by the arrival of a further report. It was alarming enough. The Bessies were within three miles of Canterbury, and Canterbury itself was in a threat of terror. The entire population was in full flight, and the masses of homeless of important people were appealing.

Invisible, bedridden, aged people, were being pressed from their homes and hurried through the night. The hospitals were being emptied. For if the Bessies arrived and found any living souls, there would be no hope for them. Bessies had been created, but it was known that they would not retain the shape.

"Gentlemen, this is appalling!" said the

The Holocaust of Horror

Was Minister? "I asked you not to come. Can't you see that?"

He was intensely agitated. If he took drastic action and had the Bomber's shot down, public opinion, he felt, would be against him. There would be a storm of indignation. People would say that he had committed mass murder; people would point out that the victims were not animals, but Englishmen—men bearing good old names like Smith and Jackson and Thomas and Brown. They were not savages to be ruthlessly destroyed.

And so, in his quandary, the War Minister decided to send every available Army tank to stop the advance. There was a depot within reasonable distance, a dozen tanks could block the road with ease, and it would be a horror which the Bomber's would never overcome.

SQUADRON-LEADER WILLIAMS, writing for orders at the Southern Association, heard of the latest order over the telephone. He was staggered. Another order had not been issued, and this young officer had reported that the marching Bomber's were already within a mile of Canterbury, and behind them was a holocaust of horror.

To the north, the roads were crowded with refugees, and Canterbury itself was already more than half-emptied. The evacuation was continuing, now, in panic. But no matter how fast the victims were, it was certain that sooner—perhaps, tomorrow—would be left behind. And nothing could save these pale victims now taken into custody.

"They don't realize—they don't understand!" exclaimed Williams harshly.

"Tanks! The orders in charge have been ordered not to fire—but merely to stop the advance."

"It's impossible, sir," said Lieutenant. "These big pots of oil in the White Hall officers and they don't understand a quarter of what is going on. I've seen the tanks, and I know. Why, when they find the tanks in their way, they'll take to the hills—and crash their objectives just the same."

"Exactly what I was thinking," said the Squadron Leader. "The higher authorities seem to think that they've only got to block the road, and the advance will be checked. But that's nonsense. The step they have taken is the very worst thing they could have done. At present, the Bomber's are intact—they remain as body of men. But if they spread out over the countryside they will smash out in a dozen different directions—pairs of men, killing and destroying as they go. It will be infinitely more difficult to deal with those than."

Lieutenant Fellowes' face was hot and flushed.

"Are you going to take a chance, sir?" he asked gently.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that my place is ready—not the south, but the big lumber."

"What?"

"Yes, sir—I took the liberty of having my loaded up with gas bombs," continued the lieutenant. "They cut there, so the

field, with engines backing away. We can get to Canterbury within ten minutes—before the Bomber's spread themselves over the town."

Squadron Leader Williams hesitated.

"By Heaven, Fellowes, I'm tempted," he murmured.

"It's now or never, sir," urged the other. "Who should we wait for orders? Hundreds of lives are at stake—hundreds of pounds worth of property is about to go up in smoke. Are we going to remain here, idle, while those old women at Whitwell make a mess of things?"

"No by god!" roared the Squadron Leader. "Listen right, young man! It's up to us to save Canterbury. Why, those few hundred tanks won't be within miles of the town yet."

How true this was! The War Minister, in giving his orders, had fondly imagined that tanks could be rushed to Canterbury in next to no time. Everything had happened so quickly, so drastically, that the good men of Whitwell had not realized the dread urgency. But that was the spot did know. The advance and better in the old Kent city was appalling. The tanks were coming, it was true, but they were a long way off.

And the Bomber's, now with the heat of destruction, were at the city's outskirts.

But overhead flew a great bombing plane. Squadron Leader Williams was at the controls, and Lieutenant Fellowes was his sole passenger. Fellowes was ready to operate the bomb.

They looked a dreadful sight as they came within range. Canterbury itself appeared to be deserted; the lighted streets were empty; not a man in 'bus was to be seen. But to the south of the town, fires were blazing from burning cottages and homes. The Bomber's were entering the city itself, destroying, burning, and in the face of the aeroplane searchlight they were revealed in all their deadly intentness. It was then, at that moment, that Squadron Leader Williams knew that he had done the right thing. These animals now would be better dead!

"Let 'em have it, Fellowes," he said gruffly into the telephone receiver.

He backed the plane round to a point, where smoke then, flying, he fired directly over the Bomber's heads.

Fellowes pulled a lever; there came a tremendous bang as a bomb went dropping earthwards.

Boom—boom!

It exploded with a mighty flash in the very midst of the machines; some fell in all directions, and great masses of deadly gas, carrying instant death, spread like a blanket amongst masses of others.

Round over the glass again, now more it dried, and this time Lieutenant Fellowes released three bombs in quick succession.

Boom—boom—boom—boom—boom—boom!

His aim was good. The bombs fell in the chicken of the Bomber's, and even those freedom who escaped the actual explosion were overtaken, a moment later, by the deadly gas.

It was all over within five minutes. Not a Bomber's escaped. They were destroyed, utterly and completely.

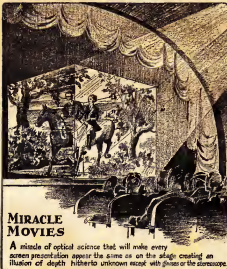
THANKS to the prompt, unflinching action of two daring airmen, Canterbury was saved—and the town's chicken population was able to return.

Later, of course, there was a full inquiry, and Squadron Leader Williams and Lieutenant Fellowes, the first being reported for being without orders, were barred as the servants of thousands of lives.

Far, after the excitement and all died down, the most eminent doctors in England had examined Professor Seymour Merris' victims; and they had declared that the gas-torture could never have been brought back to normal. The chlorine treatment had left them nothing but human monsters, and they were beyond aid. Better—far better—far them to be dead.

Can it be DONE ?

A Chance for
Inventions



MIRACLE MOVIES

A miracle of optical science that will make every screen presentation appear the same as on the stage creating an illusion of depth hitherto unknown except with glasses or the stereoscope.

Turn to page 410 for an opportunity of winning your MIRACLE movie CASH



High light took him on board and a halt for the double journey, and at the highest point reached the temperature was 59 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

The record dive was made by two divers from the salvage ship *Wrecker* while testing new diving suits. They descended to a depth of 1,111 feet beneath the sea.

The divers took with them a lamp of

Here's a SCOOP

A Weekly Review mainly about Ourselves
and of the Wonders of the World
of To-day and To-morrow

Nature Was Ahead of the Scientists

ALMOST every day brings forth some new information concerning the latest of scientific wonders—"Heavy Water," which exists in ordinary water at the rate of one part of heavy water in every six thousand parts of ordinary water.

Heavy water can be given as a medicine to critically injured patients to relieve them from certain diseases, and at the same time it helps to defeat about the fact that this heavy water is also a deadly poison.

Though heavy water is so new to science, Nature has been profiting it for millions of years—and every swampy willow tree is a "maker."

As the willow "weeps" it sheds tears of this heavy water on to the ground below, and this explains why nothing ever grows beneath a willow tree.

New commercial interests have been induced to take up the matter of this heavy water, and by means of mass-production methods five thousand a day can be recovered by a new plant installed by Imperial Chemical Industries.

This process is to provide supplies for scientists, and if the amount of heavy water it produces seems small it must be remembered that at present less than a quart of heavy water exists in the whole world—and that quart is valued at \$26,000.

Gold From Sea Water

A NUMBER of scientists believe that they have definitely found a method of extracting gold from sea water.

It has been shown that the water of the world's oceans contains many millions of pounds worth of gold, but always it has been impossible to recover any of this vast hoard of wealth owing to the fact that in the process enormous quantities of waste have had to be treated to produce even microscopic samples of gold.

But in the process of seeking a means of extracting bromine from sea water, a method of recovering gold was suggested. The bromine extracting process calls for the treating of 2,000 gallons of sea water to produce one pound of bromine, worth less than one shilling.

As the extraction of gold from the sea water is said now to be more difficult than that of bromine, experiments are in progress to use the process to recover gold.

With gold at its present price the promoters of the scheme say they can recover the gold at a profit—and use it up to three to prove it.

Italy Gains Altitude And Depth Records

A NEW extreme altitude record and a second descent by divers have just been made by Italians.

Signor Renato Donati flew on balloons to a height of 47,178 feet—some make up!

25,000 metric tons, which is capable of displacing the sea bed at enormous depths, and the two record-breakers report that up to nearly a thousand feet visibility was excellent.

A depth of 2,200 feet in the deepest was just yet given under the sea. This record was put up by two American scientists, who reached this depth in a special steel sphere in 1932.

Look for Invisible Stockings!

NO trade problem seems to distract manufacturers nowadays.

When last year ladies adopted a no-stockings fashion sales of stockings dropped by many thousands of pairs daily.

So for some time the makers (looked over the feet—and then got to work. As a result:

SCOOTERS (THE LATEST MODEL) (THE LATEST MODEL) (THE LATEST MODEL)



18, Haverhill Street, London, W.C.2.
Phone, Temple Bar 3124. Etc. 42.
(12 lines)

Subscription Rates: 2 months—£2 10s.
6 months—£4 10s. 12 months—£7 10s.

they have produced a stocking for this season which is almost invisible when worn.

Made of seamless silk, the new stockings are of a very light texture, and in order that no bathing enthusiasts can catch their legs to their skins, the stockings are to be produced in special thin heels and in extra thin shades.

Fireproof Paint?

ONE of the inventions proposed in our "Can it be Done?" series has been brought within the bounds of possibility by a New Britain Fireproof compound, just issued.

It is a water based composition called Pyroclite, which is dark grey in appearance, and dries with a dull matt surface. When applied to any rigid substance, such as wood or metal, it forms a film that swallows up, from the material it covers, and resists destructive acids, intense heat or even most oxidizing conditions.

It is not yet a perfect fireproof paint, for it is unsuitable for use by itself on places exposed to the elements. But it can be made so effective by using it as a protective undercoating—for any type of solid material, various or otherwise can be applied over it.

The Falling Birth Rate

THE continued decrease in the birth rate has been causing much concern for some time past, and now a German statistician has made the birth-rate figure the basis of an interesting prophecy.

In an article published in Berlin recently he declares that by 1955 Tokyo will be the largest city in the world with a population of close on 41 million.

New York will hold second place with 10 millions, and Shanghai third with 9 millions.

London, however, comes off rather badly. It will have dropped to sixth place in twenty years' time.

A prophetic vision with interesting possibilities. . . .

Mechanical Legs His Idea—What's Yours?

A LOS ANGELES inventor has declared that walking is work made him think, so he has thought for most ways of erasing his "problem."

When he had solved a pair of mechanical legs was added to the world's fund of novel ideas. With parts of an old bicycle, wooden legs, and a pair of old shoes, he constructed the walking machine you see illustrated here.

Putting in the middle of the machine, he takes walks which are perfect in the local legs. Referring to it, and to the inventor "step out."

Ask him (see page 460), and see how you can turn your novel idea into hard cash!



First Steps to Aerial Policemen

WHAT may be the first move towards the establishment in the future of aerial policemen took place a short time ago when 50 police officials, from all over the country watched a specially arranged demonstration of flying.

It was organized by the aviation section of the National Safety First Association, and was intended to demonstrate how fast flying clubs can help the training of the police in the spotting of "dangerous" scenes.

Full training of constables would enable them to be able to distinguish from the ground the difference between dangerous playing and the normal recreation which allows a take off or provide a landing.

BE TALLER!

Reports of Men People.

Age	Height	Weight
18	5' 10"	150 lbs.
20	6' 0"	160 lbs.
22	6' 2"	170 lbs.
24	6' 4"	180 lbs.
26	6' 6"	190 lbs.
28	6' 8"	200 lbs.
30	6' 10"	210 lbs.
32	7' 0"	220 lbs.
34	7' 2"	230 lbs.
36	7' 4"	240 lbs.
38	7' 6"	250 lbs.
40	7' 8"	260 lbs.
42	7' 10"	270 lbs.
44	8' 0"	280 lbs.
46	8' 2"	290 lbs.
48	8' 4"	300 lbs.
50	8' 6"	310 lbs.
52	8' 8"	320 lbs.
54	8' 10"	330 lbs.
56	9' 0"	340 lbs.
58	9' 2"	350 lbs.
60	9' 4"	360 lbs.
62	9' 6"	370 lbs.
64	9' 8"	380 lbs.
66	9' 10"	390 lbs.
68	10' 0"	400 lbs.
70	10' 2"	410 lbs.
72	10' 4"	420 lbs.
74	10' 6"	430 lbs.
76	10' 8"	440 lbs.
78	10' 10"	450 lbs.
80	11' 0"	460 lbs.
82	11' 2"	470 lbs.
84	11' 4"	480 lbs.
86	11' 6"	490 lbs.
88	11' 8"	500 lbs.
90	11' 10"	510 lbs.
92	12' 0"	520 lbs.
94	12' 2"	530 lbs.
96	12' 4"	540 lbs.
98	12' 6"	550 lbs.
100	12' 8"	560 lbs.

Hundreds of Gentlemen
Gentlemen, All Ages, in all parts of the world.

See Specimen Photo
Page 42, 20.

Send Now and
Tested Now.

Get money back when
you receive your
first letter.

S. E. MALCOLM ROSS,
HEALTH SPECIALIST,
SCARBOROUGH, ENGLAND.

SCOOPS—May 19, 1934

459

Every time they Breathed the Gas they went Fighting Mad

Fighting GAS

MANY gases, well known to Science, have strange and unexpected properties. A well-known illustration is Nitrous Oxide, which, given in small quantities, has the effect of producing laughter in human beings. We even call it Laughing Gas! In this humorous story our author takes Science a step farther and visualizes fighting gas—with all the startling predicaments such a gas might effect.

*A CONDUCTOR SEES RED

THE gas leaked slowly from the vents under the window frame. Bud Flanagan directed it to flow, watching through the mesh in his cloth mask the nose of peaceful beings in the street.

Very shortly that nose was to be changed! Invisible and without smell, the gas penetrated a densely packed street and, and it sank quickly to the street level.

A bus pulled into the curb. In the back and petrol buses of central London the driver felt sleep. He leaned on the wheel, nodding a yawn.

Suddenly he jerked upright. The blood streamed to his temples and he was conscious of a vast irritation. How much longer were those doddering passengers going to keep him awake? So quiet was his conscience that he, rising toward and glared through the window.

Inside, the conductor was dealing with a difficult old gentleman. Three times had the elderly passenger insisted whether he had reached his destination, and so far the ticket inspector had treated him kindly.

Now his manner changed. For no apparent reason he seized the old gentleman by his collar, dragged him to the step, and deposited him on the curb.

"Get to Jorjiba out of it!" he roared, his fists clenching convulsively. "Get out of it!"

Which failed him. With a head of fury in his eyes the passenger sat back on the ground. He promptly enough, the old gentleman retorted. His eyes were bloodshot, and he seemed as he used his umbrella as a weapon.

The greatest surprise was yet to come, however. More passengers poured from the bus, women as well as men, and mild dogs could not have stalked the conductor with more hostility. Fortunately the driver stepped down and rushed to the rescue of his mate.

In two minutes the whole street was fighting!

In the room on the second story of the warehouse, Bud Flanagan and Pat McGee raised their heads for a instant.

"Didn't I tell you?" growled Bud. "That old perfume I bought sure wore something. I guess I mixed when I found I'd purchased his formula instead of the kinks, but, gee! I'm glad now!"

Pat McGee nodded assent. "What?" he snapped at length, "we may as well get to work. It didn't look as if there's anybody to stop us."

Adjusting his cloth mask again, they swept by a group of cabs and entered a side street. Bud led the way, and they drifted downward into the street.

The scene was unbelievable. No longer was there any attempt on the part of the motorists to single out lanes from the. They



Turning from the back driver, the policeman hurled himself at Jack Mansford. With a roar of rage the reporter took up the challenge.

fought each other reflectively, and the solitary policeman on the spot hid about his eyes and left with his head down.

Bud and Pat watched him for a moment. Then they grinned again. He was no enemy on the road, almost fainting at the sight!

The two took off their hats. In a noisy jumble of off was disorder. The motorists were probably fighting in the street, and for a few seconds Bud had a free chance of damaged cars.

The bag was opened and the rings tugged into a field with his followed, along with a bunch of people. Bud discovered in a shower. Not all the bag was filled did they depart.

Even then there was no cause for hurry. Bud's first fight had gained its intensity as people passed by, and subtly behind them, he too ran to meet. Nobody entered them, he felt. On such a day in the crowd was a constant flow—the sort of flow that comes with the massive use of telephones.

The crowd pressed their way to an open road. It stood in the middle of the road and what it drove fought the policeman. The constable was trying to pull off his

hat, his left hand tilted over one eye, while he hurried through challenges to the task.

Bud and Pat checked cautiously on hand. Bud did the driving and Pat leaped in the rear. The two backed the way through the crowd, and in a few moments had disappeared.

However, a young-faced youth came out of a noisy restaurant on the same street. The youth spoke with a note of glib and dexterity, for the extraordinary fighting spirit had not yet penetrated the cafe.

Outside, however, the day was terrible, and Jack Mansford stood staring blindly at what was taking place. As a reporter on the strike, his last moment should have been to

obtain "copy," but he was too stunned for a time to move.

Then his will woke again. Feeling extraordinarily for his audience, he ran to the rear of conflict, almost burning at the "copy" for his paper.

That copy, alas! was not to be. As Jack entered the scene, he was aware of a tremendous feeling. He glared at the policeman, who had now finished with the incident, and the constable returned his gaze with anger.

Both together they uttered a roar of rage. Jack threw away his notebook, and with a gasp he ran to be leaped on the policeman.

The Fighting Gas had got Jack Mansford!

*MANSFORD HITS THE TRAIL.

IT was some time before Inspector Dale, of X Division, could make out what was happening. A phone message apprised him of the fact that there was a riot at Kent Church Street, and he did the right thing in sending a squad of uniformed men to quell the trouble.

The next message was to the effect that his men were fighting among themselves, and the luckless inspector hurried off with another look.

Fortunately the mysterious gas was disappearing by the time he arrived, but Inspector

Daily was gradually a shadow in his influence. The temper rose to a dangerous pitch, and it was only by the exercise of great self-control that he refrained from committing assault and battery on his associates.

He dragged a dried man in talismen to his feet.

"You blunderer! idiot!" gazed the Inspector. "You're a thug in the face. Take him away!" he ordered in a fury. "Take him away before I hit him!"

Later on, he grew alarmed at this outbreak. He put it down to a naturally good temper, and shrugged at their propounding his future.

By then, however, he had other things to think about. The robbery at the jeweler's had been discovered, and the former proprietor dropped his into the shop.

The Inspector listened to his tale.

"And where were you when it happened?" he asked.

"I don't know," said the other, weakly. "I-I seemed to have a brain attack."

"So tell you where he was, sir," said a violent constable. "He was trying to hit me with a hammer."

The proprietor badly denied it. The constable at a glance decided if Inspector Daily searched his head.

"Well, you're both under arrest, anyway," he gazed.

Jack Mansford was among those taken to the police station. He was in a dazed condition, and, like many others, could remember little of what had occurred. He was released eventually on bail, a fellow prisoner helping him home to his lodgings, and for the next twelve hours he lay in a heavy sleep.

Writing the following morning, he surveyed a large black eye in the mirror. He was thoroughly irritable. He dressed and made his way to the office, and the girls that greeted him on arrival did nothing to improve his temper.

"Specialist was sent on to show," said Jack. "He managed to miss that a soap."

"I can't understand it," said Willie, the sub-editor. "You appear to have been right on the spot, Mansford, and yet you stand by your men instead of 'plucking the tree.' If it hadn't been for a smart constable as the staff we might have missed it on the morning news."

Jack sneered.

"I damn what came over me. I don't know what came over everybody. I just had to punch someone. I felt sort of mad. I still feel like it," he added, as a titter went round the office.

"It's certainly queer," agreed the sub-editor. "What's your theory about it all?"

Jack looked at his theory. It was quite as simple as he had explained up on the job, and he shuddered at the idea.

"You mean anyone else, chief? I got to go to the court."

An hour later he was faced thirty shillings and found there to be of good behavior, and he left the dock with a stream of men of all ages and races. Half man, half man, he said, and then, as the men walked to the waiting room, he said, "I can't explain the rage that had taken possession of him."

Jack felt more depressed than before, and he wandered back to the office and started to look through the files of old papers, chiefly to be out of the way of his colleagues.

His eye lighted on a paragraph in a three-week-old issue.

"The case of Professor J. H. Dunn, who was found strangled and bleeding had again in his laboratory at Haverhill, was still pending the police. Nothing of value appears to have been seen, and the professor can throw no light on the mystery. He is talking anxiously of some few weeks for what he calls 'Fighting God,' a discovery he appears to have stumbled upon accidentally. He is greatly worried and hopes to publish the subject."

Mansford could be saved! If it should

fall into the wrong hands, they will fight his head!"

Jack said it through his teeth. He had been on the case himself. The professor was gradually recovering, but had lost his memory, and was now as a blank book.

With a quick movement Jack grabbed his knife and cut out the paragraph. Then he crumpled on his bed and put a visit to the staff.

"I want a free hand for a few days," he said, "to investigate this bit business."

"You want to investigate it?" exclaimed Willie. "Then he's got to be looking for some one to look, Jack!"

Jack treated the remark with dignity. He got the required permission and for the next three days he was on a rampage.

During that time much happened. On the first day a riot broke out in Cannon Town. The police again came in for jobs living in their part of the other, which was more spectacular than useful, and again a robbery occurred in the midst of the confusion.

Even the streets had their pockets picked!

They were questioned closely, and some seemed to remember two men in suits. A constable who was on the duty duty he recalled the hooded figures, but lost afterwards forgotten them. He was approached for striking the sergeant, whom he declared had struck him first, and both pleaded ignorance as to what happened next.

It was the same with everybody. Madness had seized them for a time, but they remembered nothing the morning after.

The position was unique. As soon as men were sent in to quell an outbreak, they created

TEMPLE OF DOOM

A god is a lie! A strange human form in a state of suspended animation worshipped by natives in a mysterious valley in South America. Two explorers stumble on the Temple of Doom, and meet with startling adventures while the sleeper awakes.

Read this story in SCOOPS next week.

farther lower! Even shop girls and headmen took their heads.

The next day detectives of the special branch were armed with gas masks and kept patrolling the city. On that day the riot broke out in Birmingham, where it took the city by storm. Indiscreetly, too, thousands of people were taken from Birmingham and home.

But and Pete were making money fast. As they were to be London in a newly acquired Bentley, had continued a fresh coup to his companion.

"We've only reached the fringe of this business," he said. "A dope like you can't get on for anything. What we gotta do is something big, something that'll set us up for life."

Pete was of the same opinion. They talked it over, and then in a quiet way they sought out the Duke of England. Had he in his possession that a shipment of gold for America was being removed on the following day, and he felt that his star was at the moment.

"First though," he said. "We gotta get some more of the gold. I always like that job. It's too much like hard work."

They turned all the more and met in the middle of a private house. Following their plan, another Bentley pulled up at some distance from the girls.

The race of the wheel was making. Effortless scene—a pure that, decided dominion and certain half-god qualities in the matter of sticking to his guns.

Jack Mansford had stuck to Bad and Pete all the way from Birmingham. He had been in the office at Cannon Town, rushed there by a flying squad van, and had repaid his men as they were dragging. On

that occasion the crooks had walked quickly from the scene of disorder and headed a team, and Jack, who had taken care to keep outside the zone of confusion of the mysterious gas, had taken a "snack" and killed them.

A third remark from Bad in the town had sent him to King's Court. All that evening he had been around the telephone, with the most that he might have secured in a trade for Birmingham, next to the compartment in which the crooks traveled. They had not again after separating.

So far Jack had been following his "snack," but at Birmingham he had had good of what he sought. High up on the roof of a warehouse, he had watched the crooks getting to work under the purchased mask, and had even gazed at the simplicity of their tactics.

While honest men fought each other, Bad and Pete took what they wanted!

That time, however, there had been some difficulty in finding them. Their work done, the crooks had made a pit-way in a horizontal ear, and Jack had had to make efforts to keep them in sight. Fortunately, some three cars driven had secured the vehicle when the blood-hunt took possession of him, and Jack had done the work as Bad and Pete.

As a matter of fact, he had done better. He had picked a car of higher power, and was still congratulating himself on a happy coincidence.

What would happen if he were caught in a trap of some property he had not been to show.

He must get his men first as to have some tangible evidence of his good intentions!

He left the Bentley and walked along to the gates of the drive. Dark was falling, and he had no difficulty in slipping into the grounds.

Will his eye caught a flash in the window of the house, a strange scene, a white had been seen the dining-room of a Victorian mansion.

It was filled up as a laboratory. Two men in masks were moving about, mixing chemicals with great care in a mortar, and Jack caught his breath as he noted the color of methyl chloride.

The chloride was very fast. By far the greater portion of the mixture was gas, and Jack did not need to be told the devastating effects of wood alcohol on the human brain.

"So that's the devilish formula, is it?" First Professor M. on some scheme for drinking off a permanent alcoholic vapour—a blood-ferny gas. The lighters ought to be shot in using it.

Jack was a longer living. He wanted to smash the window and leap on the crooks. At that moment his foot slipped, his hands placed on a stone slabs, and he tumbled back into a wood-grove floor bed.

* BATTLE AT THE BANK

FRESH air and the smell of damp earth pervaded him. He walked with a shudder that he had only just missed a second shot of the flames, and he left the vicinity of the window with all speed.

"Phew! That gas was making a blaze see red!"

He watched the house for a moment, but all was quiet. Taking advantage of this fact he slipped away for a moment and drove to the nearest phone box.

In two minutes he heard Willie's voice.

"Hello, Mansford. What's that?"

"The Mansford! I say, old man, I want you to send me a gas mask."

There was a pause. Then the sub, a cut, actually.

"See you don't wear an army tank or a helmet?"

"No, honest, old man, I want a gas mask. I'm on the outskirts of Middlebury."